THE JUDGMENT OF A Disintereſted Perſon: Concerning the CONTROVERSY ABOUT The B. Trinity;

Depending between

Dr. *S--th*, and Dr. *Sherlock*.

By a Divine of the Church of *England*.

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Debated by

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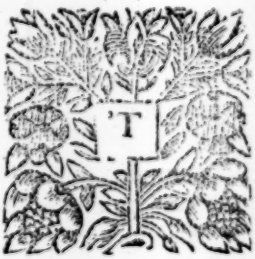

'TIS with an extraordinary Heat, on both Sides, that the Queſtion concerning the true Explication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, is managed by the Litigants; Dr. *S—th*, and Dr. *Sherlock*. The former of which is ſupported by the Univerſity of *Oxford*; the other is ſeconded by divers very Learned Perſons, ſome of them of the firſt Order in the Church.

The Heads of Colleges at *Oxford*, in an Aſſembly held *Novemb.* 25. 1695. made a Declaration or Decree: "That to ſay, there are Three Infinite diſtinct *Minds*, and "*Subſtances* in the Trinity; or that the Three Perſons in "the Trinity are Three diſtinct Infinite *Subſtances*, or "*Minds*, or *Spirits*; is an Affirmation not barely falſe, "but *Heretical* and *Impious*, and contrary to the Doctrine "of the Catholick Church, as well as to the received Do-"ctrine of the Church of *England*. In the ſame Decree,

they forbid all persons under their Care and Directions, to publish any such Doctrine for the future.

Dr. *Sherlock* in his *Examination of the* Oxford *Decree*, Answers; That he will undertake to procure any day of the Year, a meeting of as many and considerable Divines, who shall condemn their Decree. He says moreover, That they have condemned by this Decree the true Orthodox Faith of the Catholick Church; and that their Decree is directly contrary to the Fathers, and General Councils.

Briefly, the *University* saith; The Doctrine of *Three* Infinite Substances, or Minds, or Spirits, is *Impiety* and *Heresy:* Dr. *Sherlock* (seconded by not a few, very Learned and Eminent Persons) contends, it is the very Faith of the whole Church, delivered down to our Times (through the Intermediate Ages) from the Councils and Fathers; and that to believe otherwise concerning the Trinity, is *Heresy* and *Nonsense*. The Charge on both sides runs as high, as the Difference is wide and important: Each Party condemns the Other's Doctrine of Heresy; and of Apostacy from the Councils, and Fathers.

If they were content to Brand in this manner, only Doctrines and Opinions, the matter were not much: But they have laid aside all Charity towards one another's Persons, and all that Regard, that is wont to be paid to the Dignity or Merit of Honourable Adversaries.

They at *Oxford* have printed a Book, *The History of* V. Gentilis, *the Tritheist*; written by *B. Aretius* in the last Age, in the *Latin* Tongue; but Translated into *English* this present Year, *for the use* (say they, in the Title-page) *of Dr.* Sherlock. Intending by that Expression, first, to abuse *him*, as if he could not read the Book, in the *Latin*; then, to intimate to the Reader, that *Gentilis* was condemned and beheaded for the Doctrine maintained by Dr. *Sherlock*; which is not true. For *Gentilis* was executed.

ted for *a complication of Hereſies*, for *Blaſphemies* and witleſs *Scurrilities* againſt the Perſon of Our Saviour; and (as his Sentence declares) *for final and irreclamable Obſtinacy* in his Heterodoxies and Impieties, utterly refuſing to abjure them. This (ſeaſonable, appoſite) Book concerning *Gentilis*, is concluded with a Poſtſcript; wherein, after ſaying that *the Wolf* [Dr. *Sherlock*] is now unkennelled, and the Univerſity has him in full chaſe: They add; It is hoped, that She [the Univerſity] will not give over, till ſhe has run him down.

But they have alſo publiſhed another Book, *Remarks on Dr.* Sherlock's *Examination of the* Oxford *Decree.* Here, miſtaking Dr. *Sherlock's* Notions, confounding what he chiefly diſtinguiſhes in the Deity, *Nature*, and *Subſtance*; the Author nauſeates the (Learned and Practiſed) Reader with a fruitleſs Oppoſition to a Chimera of his own. But the chief aim of the Book, is; not to diſcuſs the Doctor's Examination of the Decree, but to affront and to aſperſe him. He teaches the Dean *Latin* out of the *Oxford* Grammar: And having compared him to the famous Turn-coat *Ecebolius*, he promiſes, that on condition he will lie down to the Members of the Univerſity, intreating them to tread on him *as Salt that has loſt its ſavour*, they will (generouſly) lift him from the ground. Nay, they will (graciouſly) pardon him; they will even (ſweetly) comfort him: Finally, they will diſmiſs him (ſo good are they) with thoſe words of our Saviour, *Sin no more, leſt a worſe thing happen to thee.*

But theſe are Careſſes, and Indearments; in compariſon of the things ſaid by Dr. *S—th*; whoſe two Books (*Animadverſions on Dr.* Sherlock, and *Tritheiſm charged on Dr.* Sherlock) are ſuch an *Academy of Complements* on the Dean, that for all time to come, hither muſt the Lovers and the Maidens reſort for Flowers to ſprinkle and ſweeten their Letters, and Amorous Compoſitions. *Ovid*, in his *Ibis*,

Ibis, was an Aſs, in compariſon of Dr. *S—th*; whether you conſider the Expreſſion, or Occaſion.

And what ſays Dean *Sherlock*; have theſe Gentlemen run him into a Corner? To do him right, as much as (I think) he is miſtaken in the Queſtion under debate; he is a man of a clear Spirit and Courage: Far from being daſtarded or awed by the Inſults of Doctor *S—th*; he attacks the Univerſity it ſelf, all the Heads of Colleges at once: He ſcorns to be upon the defenſive only; he carries the War into the Enemy's Country, and beats up *the Head-quarter* of the *Nominals*. He does not indeed ſo often charge our *Oxford* friends with Ignorance, or overſight in Words, Accents, or Punctuation, as they him: But for *inaccurate Reaſonings*, and the Charge of *Hereſy*, the two great Blots of a Learned Man, and a Divine, he comes wholly out of their debt in Imputations and Challenges of that kind. In ſhort, He is content they ſhould be *tolerable Pedants*; not unqualified to keep *a Village School*: But that they are Divines, he ſeems no more diſpoſed to grant; than they will allow, that he is the Great *Mogul*, or the *Perſian Sophi*.

Dr. *Sherlock* is unknown to me, except by ſight; *Mihi nec Beneficio notus, nec Injuriâ*: But I cannot but profeſs my eſteem of his noble Mind; another man, after having been ſo abuſed, would have been diſpirited, and quite out of countenance; would have appealed *to the Chriſtian and Courteous Reader* in whining Periods; but this Doctor is not for putting the finger to the eye, but looks about where the Enemy ſtands thickeſt and firmeſt, and thither he haſts to the Charge. Every Craven will inſult, when he thinks he has an advantage; none but the Worthy keep their whole Courage againſt baſe uſage, occaſioned either by malice, emulation, miſinformation, or other ſuch like cauſe, which too often happen to the moſt deſerving.

As to what is ſaid in the Preface, to the late Tranſlation of the *Hiſtory of Gentilis*, the Tritheiſt; and in the *Remarks on Dr.* Sherlock's *Examination of the* Oxford *Decree*; that Dr. *Sherlock* is *the firſt* that broached among us the Hereſy of *Three diſtinct Infinite Minds, Spirits, or Subſtances*; and has been followed only by Mr. *J. B.* of *Folkſtone* in *Kent*, Mr. *Bingham*, Fellow of *Univerſity* College, and ſomebody who hath twice preached that Doctrine in a certain Cathedral, of whom they reckon but only as *Pedees*, and Diſciples of Dr. *Sherlock*: I wiſh it were not ſo great a miſtake as it certainly is.

The *firſt Engliſh Writer*, who profeſſedly and directly maintained that the Three Perſons of the Trinity are *Three diſtinct Subſtances*, was the moſt Learned Author of the *Intellectual Syſtem*. And in affirming, they are *Three* (diſtinct *Spiritual*) *Subſtances*; 'tis unqueſtionable that he underſtood them to be *Three Spirits*, and *Three Minds*: For if their *Subſtances* are divers and diſtinct, ſo muſt their *Life* alſo, and their *Intellect*, and all other whether Faculties or Powers of their Subſtances; the reaſon is obvious, becauſe they are things that inhere in the Subſtance. Dr. *Cudworth* therefore was the firſt of *Real Trinitarians*; as they who maintain Three Infinite Minds, Spirits, or Subſtances, begin (now) to be called. If Dr. *S—th* could neither eat nor ſleep, till he found out another *Gentilis*; Dr. *Cudworth* had been his man, not Dr. *Sherlock*. For Dr. *Sherlock* and all our preſent *Realiſts*, though they believe the Divine Perſons to be ſo many diſtinct *Spirits*, *Minds*, and *Subſtances*; yet they hold them to be *Equal*, in all Divine Attributes and Properties: But Dr. *Cudworth*, wholly agreeing with *Gentilis*, will have the Father only to be truly and properly God; the Son and Spirit are *God*, *Omnipotent*, and the other Divine Attributes, but only (he ſaith) by the Father's concurrence with *them*, and *their* ſubordination and ſubjection to *him*; they are not

Omnipo-

Omnipotent (and the reſt) *ad Intra* or *of themſelves*, but only by means of the Father's concurrence; in which ſenſe there is no Creature, but may be ſaid to be Omnipotent, and God.

After Dr. *Cudworth* came Dr. *Bull*, Author of the *Defence of the Nicene Faith*; a Book that has rendered the Writer of it very famous, not in *England* only or chiefly, but beyond the Waters. 'Tis compoſed in a Style moſt truly *Latin*; with much vivacity of expreſſion, with great vigour and ſubtlety of thought: In ſhort, 'tis worthy of the noble Argument, of which it treats. This Author having ſtudied the Fathers with an application, diligence, and obſervation almoſt peculiar to *him*, perceived, that the Schools have departed from that notion of the Trinity, believed and profeſſed by ſome of the principal Fathers. For whereas the Schools by *Homo-ouſios conſubſtantial* or *of the ſame Subſtance*, mean; that the Three Divine Perſons are but one Subſtance in number, or *one ſelf-ſame Subſtance*: Dr. *Bull* plainly diſcerned, that by *Homo-ouſios* the Fathers intended *one Subſtance, in Nature and Properties*; not *one in number*. In ſhort, That the Divine Perſons are *Three diſtinct Numerical Subſtances*; and one Subſtance *only in kind and ſort*, that is, in Eſſential Properties: They are one Subſtance, as all Angels, or (to uſe one of *his* Compariſons) all Stars have *the ſame kind* of Subſtance; the Subſtances of the Three Divine Perſons are alike *immutable, ſpiritual*, and *qualified with all the ſame Divine Attributes*; in this ſenſe only they are conſubſtantial, or *the ſame Subſtance*. But he expreſly alſo ſaith, that they are *Three Spirits*: And that when the Third Perſon is called *H. Spirit*, it is *only by Appropriation*, becauſe he is *the Spiration* of the Firſt and Second Perſons; who are alſo *moſt Holy Spirits*, no leſs than he is. This is Dr. *Bull*'s Explication of the Trinity of Divine Perſons; 'tis undeniable, that his Doctrine is the ſame with Dr. *Sherlock*'s: Dr. *Sherlock*

lock has but ſucceeded to Dr. *Bull*, in the *Hereſy* (as the *Oxford* Decree ſpeaks) of *three diſtinct Subſtances; and Spirits*; which alſo (unavoidably) implies *three Beings*, and *three Minds*.

After Dr. *Bull* and Dr. *Sherlock*, Mr. *How* began to write in defence of the ſame Notion of the Trinity. Mr. *How* not only calls the three Perſons of the Trinity, diſtinct *Subſtances*, and uncreated *Spirits*; but he affirms, that *they maintain a delicious Society*: And that being *diſtinct Intelligent Natures*, they could have but little Injoyment, without ſuch Conſociation; which muſt needs *(ſaith he farther)* be a more perfect Bleſſedneſs, than can be imagined in an Eternal Solitude. The Authorities quoted by Mr. *How*, and the Arguments he advances, plainly ſhew the great Learning and Abilities of the Writer; and atone ſufficiently for the obſcurity, harſhneſs, and abruptneſs of his Style. He is the only Perſon of the Diſſenters, who hath written on this Subject: But 'tis often ſeen, that in obſcure and difficult Queſtions; whole Parties will afterwards follow blindly what hath been ſaid in the caſe, by ſome Leading man among them.

After the publication of Mr. *How*'s *Calm Diſcourſe*, the Preſs was delivered of four Sermons by his *Grace* the late Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*; who profeſſes in theſe Sermons, that by *Perſons* in this Queſtion concerning the Trinity, he underſtands *ſuch* Perſons, *as* we ordinarily intend when *in common familiar Diſcourſe* we ſpeak of *diſtinct Perſons*. Which is to ſay, He means three living, real, phyſical, *ſubſiſting Perſons*: Not *Properties*, meer *Relations*, *States*, *Modes*, or ſuch like; which *in common Diſcourſe* are never ſpoken of as *Perſons*, but only as *Affections* and *Qualifications* of Perſons. The Archbiſhop then was as truly *a Realiſt*, as Dr. *Sherlock*; and had the ſame notion of the Trinity that he has.

The Bishop of *Gloceſter* can never be excuſed, from being as heretical (to the *Oxford* Doctors) as the Archbiſhop was; for he expreſly calls the Perſons of the Trinity, *diſtinct Beings*, *different Subſtances*, *ſeveral Spirits*: He adds, We cannot underſtand but that it muſt be *a Contradiction*, to affirm that *the Perſons of the Trinity are but One numerical Subſtance*. He takes notice, that Dr. *Cudworth* and Dr. *Bull* have largely proved; That St. *Athanaſius* and the *Nicene* Council, and the Fathers, give this very Account of the Perſons of the Trinity: namely, That they are different *Subſtances*, diſtinct *Beings*.

Mr. *J. B.* has not only eſpouſed, but defended Dr. *Sherlock*'s Explication of the Trinity; in his *Anſwer to Dr.* S—th's *Animadverſions on Dr.* Sherlock. This Anſwer has been mentioned with a great deal of (merited) Reſpect; by divers Learned men, in ſome late Books. There was no reaſon, that the Tranſlator of *the Hiſtory of* V. Gentilis, ſhould ſay; that *J. B.* to his *poor All* had defended Dr. *Sherlock*: For that *poor All* will maintain it ſelf with reputation, againſt the *poor Malice* of any whomſoever. *J. B.* had only deſcribed himſelf, thus, J. B. *Presbyter of the Church of* England; either out of modeſty, or to decline the Inſults of the Impetuous Animadverter, and his *Oxford* Friends: but induſtrious Revenge having found out, or pretending to have found, that he is Miniſter of *Folkſtone* in *Kent*, has deſcribed him in Print (in that ſo neceſſary Work, *the Hiſtory of* Gentilis) by the place of his Preferment. An Incivility, or rather an Inhumanity, never yet practiſed among Learned men; in caſes either dangerous or invidious: They might as well have given us his name at length, without ſuppreſſing any of the Vowels or Conſonants of it.

I might add divers more, and thoſe alſo Learned men; but here is *a Septenary* of ſuch Perſons, owning and defending ſuch a Trinity as Dr. *Sherlock* contends for; as none

none but those who are very angry, will call *little* mĩ: And therefore the Other (whom I shall grant to be *the Orthodox)* Party, should have managed their Controversy with more Temper and Charity; and what I have hitherto said, is (chiefly) with intention to persuade 'em thereto. It will not excuse Dr. *S—th*, and the Doctors and Writers of *his* Side, that they have not yet directly fallen foul, but only on Dean *Sherlock*, Mr. *Bingham*, and Mr. *J. B.* For seeing that all that has been said to these, is merely for their Opinion: the same Imputations, of *Impiety* and *Heresy*, and the rest, objected to them, are (implicitly) designed also against all others, that have publickly defended or professed the same Doctrine. Dr. *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, Archbishop *Tillotson's* Four Sermons, Dr. *Bull's Defence of the* Nicene *Faith*, the Bishop of *Gloceſter's Propositions*; not to mention the Books of the rest, to which it will not be so easy to answer, as to affront the Writers of them; I say, these were extant, when the *Oxford* Decree (against the Heresy of *three Infinite distinct Substances, Minds, and Spirits)* was made: Had it not been convenient therefore, that the *Oxford* Doctors had softned their Censure? What if it had not been pointed with the words, *Impious* and *Heretical?* what if they had left out *contrary to the Doctrine of the Catholick Church*, when 'tis certain this was the Doctrine of many of the *Catholick Fathers?*

But my esteem of Charity and Peace, has carried me farther in this Judgment I have made of the Writings and Persons of others; than I designed at first: It is time now, that we propose,

1. The different Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity or *Three Divine Persons*, by these two (very considerable) contending Parties.
2. The Defence, that *each* makes of its Doctrine.

3. If we can hit upon it, ſome Expedients (though not to reconcile the Opinions, which ſeems impoſſible, yet) to extinguiſh the fire, that (ſo great) Anger, and (ſuch) hard Words may at length kindle in the Church. The Queſtion is of that importance, that if not diſputed with mutual Charity; it may beget a Strife and Schiſm, no leſs great and dangerous, than that between *Alexander* and *Arius*. In very deed, if we conſider all that is implied in the two (contrary) Explications; the Strife between the *Arians* and the Church, was not either of that Value, or Conſequence, as this preſent Controverſy is. And whereas 'tis litigated now in *England* only, we are to expect, it will paſs the Seas; and that various judgments will be made of it, to the dividing the Church abroad, as well as here.

The Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity, by the Contending Parties

As to the Explications; the Party called *Realiſts*, ſay. The H. Trinity or the Three Divine Perſons are three diſtinct Infinite *Subſtances*, three *Minds*, three *Spirits*. They are three *ſuch* Perſons, that is, *as* diſtinct, and *as really* ſubſiſting and living; as three *Angels*, or three *Men* are. Each Perſon has his own peculiar individual *Subſtance*; his own perſonal and proper *Underſtanding*, *Will*, and *Power of Action*; an *Omnipotence*, *Omniſcience*, and all other *Divine Attributes*, divers in number from the perſonal Omnipotence, Omniſcience, *&c.* of the other two Perſons. In the Creation, as alſo in the Government of the World, they are to be conſidered as *diſtinct Agents*: Not as one Creator, or one Governor, but only in this ſenſe; that the Father acts *by* the Son, *through* the Spirit, Of which, the meaning is; that the Father in regard of his *Paternal Prerogative*, acteth not *immediately*, but *by* the Son and Spirit.

But

But the Church, whom they now call *the Nominals*, cries out; this is *three Gods:* And *the name* is in vain with held, when *the thing* is ſo plainly affirmed. We are not to conceive of *the Divine Perſons*, ſay the *Nominals*, as we do of *created Perſons:* The conception we ought to have of their *Perſonalities*, or what they are *as they are Perſons*, is as different from the Perſonalities of any Created Beings; as the Perfections of the Divinity are paramount, to Human or Angelical Perfections God is but one Being, but one Subſtance, Mind, or Spirit; with one only Will, Underſtanding, Energy, or power of Action. Nor are the Divine Attributes either multiplied, or repeated in the Deity; there neither is, nor needs there be, nor (in very deed) can there be, more than one Omnipotence, Omniſcience, or other Divine Perfection. It is only *God*, that phyſically and *properly Exiſts*, as a Being, or a compleat Spirit and Mind; the Perſons are only the Subſtance (God's Infinite, Spiritual, and moſt perfect Subſtance or Nature) with the three Properties, *to be of none*, *to be begotten*, and *to proceed*.

If any are deſirous, to approach yet nearer, to the *inacceſſible Light*; ſuch may conſider in God, firſt *Original Wiſdom*, as the Perſon of the Father. Then, *reflex Wiſdom*; even the *Logos*, or Wiſdom that reſulteth from God's contemplating and knowing his own Perfections; or *the perfect Image* that is *generated*, by God's knowing and underſtanding himſelf; which is called *the Son*. Laſtly, The (Immanent) Act of *Love*, by which God willeth or loveth himſelf; his *Eternal Spiration* (or as it were, breathing) of love toward himſelf; named the *H. Spirit*.

Thus a Son of the Church, or Nominal Trinitarian, would account for his Faith; concerning this Myſtery. This is *the Explication* of the Faith (and *the Rule* by which to interpret the Texts that ſpeak of the Sacred Trinity) *profeſſed* by the Catholick Church; *declared* in General Coun-

Councils, the only Authority that can define the Faith, and pronounce of Hereſy; *maintained* in the Writings of all Divines, that are allowed to be Orthodox; and (laſtly) *ſupported* by ſuch demonſtrative Reaſons, that the (ſo much talkt of) *Mathematical Certainty* is not ſuperior to them.

That there is but one Infinite *Subſtance*, but one Divine *Mind* or *Spirit*; that no Divine Attribute (ſuch as Omniſcience, Omnipotence, *&c.*) is more than once in the Deity; that notwithſtanding three Perſons (which are ſo many Properties in the Divine Nature, Subſtance, or Eſſence) yet there is but one Intellect, Will, or Power of Action (in number) in God: The Proof of this Faith, conſiſts partly *in Authorities*; partly *in Reaſons* or Arguments. If in propoſing them, any thing that is leſs reſpectful ſhall happen to drop from me; I here proteſt, it is not a meditated or wilful Contempt of thoſe Learned Perſons, againſt whoſe Doctrine I am ingaged; but purely an Imbecillity, and Inadvertency of my own, of which I do not approve, nor give my Aſſent to it.

The Authorities.

As the Queſtion, depending between the *Church* and the *Realiſts*, is not ſimply or only, What is *the truth* of the caſe or matter; but what has been *the Doctrine of the Catholick Church* about it: So it is neceſſary to examine Authorities or Witneſſes, as well as produce our Reaſons and Arguments. In very deed, it is by Authorities only that we can decide, what has been the Belief of the Catholick Church, in the Inquiry before us: And the Uniform Belief of the Church Catholick, will weigh in ſuch a Debate as this, with moſt People, nay (I doubt not) with many of the Realiſts themſelves; as much as any Reaſon

Reaſon or Argument whatſoever: The Church's Faith and Authority will be judged, it may be, to be the moſt probable Argument of all. It is evident therefore, that the Authorities that may be cited, are Allegations of very great conſideration; and in ſo great a Queſtion, it would be a deteſtable Fraud, to be inſincere: I ſhall therefore profeſs before-hand, that I will urge no falſe Authorities; nor any ways diſguiſe thoſe Authorities that I produce.

The Authorities that I pretend to, are *three General Councils*, two of them *Greek*, the other *Latin*; *the Church of* England, in the firſt of the 39 Articles, and in the *Athanaſian* Creed; all *Church-Writers*, whether Interpreters, Syſtematics, or Polemics, ſince the Determination by the *Lateran* Council about the Year 1215. *the Reformed Churches* of the *Alpin* Provinces; *the* Oxford *Decree*, with what hath been ſince tranſacted.

(1.) General Councils. A General Council is the higheſt and laſt Judicatory of the Church; from hence, there lies no Appeal, but to the Judgment of God Almighty. Whatſoever *beſides*, or *farther* may be meant in thoſe words of our Saviour; *Tell the Church*, and again, *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as an Heathen:* No man will conteſt it, that a General Council, which is *the Church Repreſentative*, is certainly comprehended in that Charge to all.

The Queſtion between the *Church*, and the *Realiſts*, is; Whether there are *three* Infinite (Spiritual and Intellectual) *Subſtances:* And in conſequence, three Infinite *Minds* and *Spirits*; three (diſtinct) Omniſcient *Underſtandings*, three All-powerful *Wills* and *Energies*? As this is the Queſtion; ſo it is agreed on both ſides, that in affirming any *one* of theſe, a man affirms *all* the reſt. If (for inſtance) I ſay, there are *three* diſtinct Infinite (Intellectual) *Subſtances*; I have ſaid thereby and therein, *three* Infinite.

finite *Spirits* and *Minds*, *three* Divine *Underſtandings*, *Wills*, and *Energies*. Or if I ſay, three Divine *Underſtandings*, three All-powerful *Wills*, or *Energies*; I ſay alſo three Divine or Infinite Subſtances, Spirits, and Minds. This is granted on all hands; but was neceſſary to be noted and premiſed for the uſe of thoſe who are not much converſant in theſe Queſtions: Therefore what have *General Councils*, the Supream (declarative) Authority in the Church, and to which both *Realiſts* and *Nominals* profeſs ſubmiſſion, defined in the Caſe?

The *NICENE* COUNCIL. Though all General Councils are of equal *intrinſick Authority*; yet the firſt *Nicene* Council (held *Anno* 325.) has a more general Reverence, a more abſolute Submiſſion, paid to it, than any of the other Oecumenical Councils: We ſhall begin therefore with this Council; as firſt in Time, and in Dignity, of all the General Councils.

Every body knows, that this was the Council, which brought into the Church the term *Homo-ouſios*; by which is meant, that the Divine Perſons have *the ſame Subſtance*. But the Realiſts controvert it with us; Whether by *the ſame Subſtance* the Fathers intended *the ſame Subſtance in number*, the *ſelf-ſame* Subſtance, ſo that there is indeed but one Divine Subſtance: or *the ſame Subſtance for kind, ſort, or nature*, namely the ſame *in all Eſſential Properties*, ſuch as Infinite Duration, Wiſdom, Power, and ſuch like; ſo that in truth there are *three* diſtinct (or numerically different) Infinite Subſtances, which are the ſame only in nature and kind, that is (as has been ſaid) in Properties. Even as all Stars, though having each its diſtinct body, different in number from all other Stars, are *Homo-ouſial*, conſubſtantial, or *of the ſame kind of Subſtance*; or as Angels are *Homo-ouſial* to Angels, Souls to Souls, and Men to Men. 'Tis controverted, I ſay, between the Church and the Realiſts; which of theſe the Council meant

meant by the term *Homo-ouſios*, conſubſtantial, or *of the ſame Subſtance*, when applied to the Divine Perſons? The Council it ſelf has not explained it ſelf: But the Hiſtorians who were next in time to this Council, and who have told us whatever we know of it, ſay thoſe things; that it may be inferred with certainty, that by *Homo-ouſios (of the ſame Subſtance)* the Council intended *the ſelf-ſame Subſtance*, one Subſtance *in number*, not one *only in kind, ſort, or properties*, which were not indeed *the ſame Subſtance*, but *like Subſtance*, or to ſpeak properly *like Subſtances*. The Hiſtorians of thoſe Primitive time tell us; that there was a great Contention about *Homo-ouſios* in the Council it ſelf, but that at length it was carried that it ought to be ſaid *the Divine Perſons are Homo-ouſial*, or of the ſame Subſtance; farther, that though the word was Voted in the Council, yet when the Council broke up the Biſhops (who had compoſed the Council) ſtill wrangled about this term; many of them diſliked it, while others (the ſame who had prevailed in the Council) defended it: And laſtly, That thoſe who contrived and maintained the word *Homo-ouſios*, were condemned by thoſe that oppoſed it, *as Sabellians*; and thoſe that oppoſed it, were cenſured by ſuch as contended for it, *as introducing many gods*. That is, they charged one another, juſt as the *Nominals* and *Realiſts* now do: For the Realiſts upbraid *us*, that we are *Sabellians*; we anſwer again, That the Doctrine of the Realiſts (*three* Infinite Intellectual Subſtances, *three* Divine Spirits, or Minds) implies *three Gods*. Let us hear the Hiſtorian, *Socrates*, H. E. *l.* 1. *c.* 23. "Thoſe Fathers of the Coun-
"cil that were againſt the term *Homo-ouſios*, or *of one Sub-*
"*ſtance*, accuſed ſuch as were for it, as *Sabellians* and *Mon-*
"*taniſts*; calling them alſo *blaſphemous*, becauſe they ſeem-
"ed to take away [*by that word*] *the real Exiſtence of the*
"*Son of God*: While on the other hand, they that ſtood
"for *Homo-ouſios*, believed, that ſuch as were againſt it,

" did introduce *more gods*; and therefore deteſted them, " as reviving Paganiſm.

This is a deciding-Teſtimony in the Caſe. For the Realiſts will never be able to ſhew, that if by *Homo ouſios* the Council intended *three diſtinct Subſtances, three Beings, Minds* or *Spirits*; how the Fathers of the Council could be accuſed of *Montaniſm* or *Sabellianiſm:* For three Intellectual Infinite Subſtances, three Divine Beings, Spirits or Minds, was the Doctrine chiefly oppoſed by *Sabellius* and *Montanus*; as all confeſs. And on the other hand, The Council which contrived and defended *Homo-ouſios*, could as little cenſure thoſe that were againſt it, as Introducers of Tritheiſm and Paganiſm, which the Hiſtorian witneſſes that it did with great earneſtneſs; if it had not been ſuppoſed, that in oppoſing *Homo-ouſios*, they profeſſed to believe three Infinite Subſtances in number, three Divine Minds and Spirits; which is the very Doctrine of the Modern Realiſts.

In ſhort, I ſay; While the Fathers of the *Nicene* Council are accuſed, that by *Homo-ouſios* they revived *Sabellianiſm* and *Montaniſm*; and while they impute Tritheiſm and Paganiſm, to thoſe that reject *Homo-ouſios:* we certainly learn, that by *Homo-ouſios*, Conſubſtantial, or of the ſame Subſtance, they intended *the ſelf-ſame Subſtance*; which (all will grant) is as much as to ſay, but one Infinite Subſtance in number, but one Divine Mind and Spirit. The Imputation laid to them, and their (reciprocal) Accuſation of their Oppoſers, do both evince what was then meant by *Homo-ouſios*. The Strife at that time between the Fathers of that Council on the one Side, and thoſe who oppoſed *Homo-ouſios* on the other, was the very ſame as now between the Church (or Nominals) and the Realiſts; the Realiſts accuſe the Church and the Orthodox Writers as *Sabellians*, and the Church impleads the Realiſts as introducing *more Gods:* It muſt therefore be undeniable,

deniable, that the Church rightly interprets *Homo-ouſios*, it believes as the *Nicene* Council believed; and the Realiſts inſtead of ſuch an *Homo-ouſios* as the Council believes, ſet up an *Homo-ouſios* which the Council deſigned to oppoſe and deſtroy.

It is not, in my Judgment, at all material; that Dr. *Cudworth*, Dr. *Bull*, and *Stephanus Curcellæus*, alledge a great number of Paſſages out of particular Fathers, to ſhew that by *Homo-ouſios* thoſe Fathers (the Fathers whom they quote) intended, not *one Subſtance in number*, but *one in kind, ſort, and properties:* For my Inquiry is not concerning the Judgment of ſome particular Fathers, but what *the Nicene Council* meant by *Homo-ouſios*. I ſhall grant, that *as* in the Council it ſelf ſome Fathers diſliked that term; though the Council (for *the Majority* is ever underſtood to be the Council, Senate, Parliament, or other publick Body) voted it, and inſerted it into the Creed which they publiſhed, now called *the Nicene Creed: So* when the Council was broke up, the Fathers who had been againſt this term, and yet were not *Arians*, formed ſo ſtrong a Party; that in little more than Fifty years time, *Homo-ouſios* was interpreted by a great number of Writers, as 'tis now by the Realiſts; which *Curcellæus*, *Petavius*, and Dr. *Bull* have ſufficiently proved. But particular Fathers are but particular Doctors; 'tis from General Councils only, that we can take the Churches Doctrine: For the Church never intends to be repreſented by private Doctors, but only by a General Council.

Farthermore, That by *Homo-ouſios* the Council intended *one ſelf-ſame Subſtance*; not as the Realiſts now interpret, three diſtinct infinite Subſtances which are one *only in ſort, kind, or properties*, that is to ſay, *like Subſtances:* We learn from the *Arian* Hiſtorian, *Philoſtorgius*; as well as from (the Orthodox and Catholick) *Socrates*. *Philoſtorgius* ſaith, That when the Council had voted the term

Homo-ousios; the *Arian* Bishops in the Council were at a great loss, not being able to subscribe to it: But at length, at the Suggestion of an *Arian* Princess (*Constantia*, Sister of the Emperor *Constantine*, and Dowager of the Emperor *Licinius*) they resolved to subscribe to *Homo-ousios*, *because* and *as* it may be interpreted by *Homoi-ousios*, lib. 1. c. 8. His meaning is, *Homo-ousios*, or *of the same Substance* may be interpreted *the self same Substance*; to which Sense the *Arians* could not subscribe, it being the Sense of the Orthodox Party of the Council: But it may also be interpreted *of like Substance*, namely *the same Substance in sort, or kind, or properties*; which because the *Arians* could in some sense admit, therefore by Advice of *Constantia* they chose rather to subscribe to the word, than lose their Bishopricks. We have not at this day, the History of *Philostorgius*; but only an Abridgment of it, Book by Book, and Chapter by Chapter, by the Patriarch *Photius*: The Reader may be desirous to have the very words of *Photius*; they are these. "*Philostorgius* confes-"ses, that all the Bishops in the Council consented to *the* "*Exposition* of the Faith; [he means, to the term *Homo-*"*ousios*, which was *the Test* they had agreed on, by which "to distinguist between *Faith* and *Heresy*;] but only *Se-*"*cundus* and *Theon*. The rest of the *Arian* Bishops, *Eu-*"*sebius*, *Maris*, *Theognis*, and others, submitted to the "Council: But as *Philostorgius* himself owns, *deceitfully* "*and fraudulently*; for by *Homo-ousios* or *of the same Sub-*"*stance*, they meant *Homoi-ousios*, or *of like Substance*. "And this by Advice of *Constantina* [he means *Constan-*"*tia*] Sister to the Emperor. In this Relation by *Pho-*tius, the words *deceitfully and fraudulently* plainly prove, that this *Arian* Interpretation of *Homo-ousios*, was not the Sense intended by the Council: They instruct us clearly, that by *Homo-ousios* the Council meant *one self-same Sub-*stance, the same Substance in number; not *like Sub-*

stance,

ſtance, which was the Eluſion uſed by the *Arians*, and is now imbraced (though not in ſo good a ſenſe) by the *Realiſts*.

This is what I have to offer from the Holy Oecumenical *Nicene Council*; the firſt of all the General Councils: And to which all ſucceeding Councils, and the whole Catholick Church, have ever profeſſed an intire ſubmiſſion.

CONSTANTINOPOLITAN COUNCIL.

The next General Council, from which I have hitherto obſerved any thing concerning our preſent Controverſy, is the Third Council of *Conſtantinople*; reckoned the Sixth of the General Councils. This Council began in the 13th of the Emperor *Pogonatus*, *Ann. Dom.* 680. All the Patriarchs were preſent at it, either in perſon, or by their Legats; the Biſhops of *the Weſt* thought fit (by reaſon of the great diſtance of place) to be repreſented by three Biſhops; the Biſhops of the *Orient* (as nearer) were generally preſent in perſon, and were in all about 160. But the Biſhops that repreſented the *Weſtern* Biſhops, were deputed by thoſe Biſhops themſelves, then aſſembled in Council at *Rome*, and making the number of 125 Fathers.

The occaſion of convening this Council, was to determine the Queſtion, Whether there are *two Wills* and *two Operations* in the Lord Chriſt; or only one Operation, and one Will? After a long concertation, the Fathers of the Council (unanimouſly) concluded; That "there are two "Natural Wills and two Operations in Jeſus Chriſt, yet "ſo that the Human Will always follows the Divine, and "is perfectly ſubject to it. Thoſe Churches or perſons who have ſince diſſented from this Deciſion by the Council, are called *Monothelites*; as who ſhould ſay, the Hereticks that hold but *one Will*.

Almoſt none of the Fathers in this Council, but *Macarius* Patriarch of *Antioch*, were for one Will in the Lord Chriſt; they were perſuaded, that becauſe of *the two Natures*,

tures (the Divine and Human) it muſt be ſaid that *the Lord Chriſt hath two Natural Wills.*

It muſt however be confeſſed, the Queſtion was difficult enough; for as it ſeemed reaſonable to ſay, Jeſus Chriſt has two Natural Wills and Operations, becauſe of his two Natures, the Divine and Human: So *Macarius* of *Antioch*, and the few Learned Men that adhered to him, alledged very plauſibly; that though Chriſt has two Natures, he is *but one Perſon*, which Perſon the Church it ſelf calls *God-man*; and therefore that in like manner it ſhould be ſaid He hath *but one Will*, even a *Theandric* or *Dei-virile* Will.

But what from this Council, is to our preſent purpoſe, is this. *Macarius* (and his little Party) preſented to the Council three Sheets of Quotations out of the Fathers; telling them, That in theſe Quotations, the Fathers declare there is *but one Operation*, and *one Will* in our Lord Chriſt. But ſaith the Hiſtory, in examining theſe Sheets, the Fathers of the Council found; that many of theſe Quotations had been falſified by *Macarius*: And for the reſt, they acknowledge indeed *but one Will*, but they are to be underſtood of *the Will of the three Perſons of the Trinity*; not of the Lord Chriſt, who hath two Natural Wills, becauſe he hath two Natures.

It is moſt evident here, that though the Council owned two Wills in Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe of the Divine and Human Natures; yet in God, *in the three Divine Perſons*, as the Council ſpeaks, there is *but one Will*: But if but one Will, then (inconteſtably) *but one Underſtanding*, and *one Subſtance*.

Nor can our preſent Realiſts elude this Authority, by pretending; That the Council might mean one Will in God, only in regard of the perpetual conſent and concurrence of the three Divine Perſons: For the Queſtion in the Council was, concerning *Natural Wills*, or *Powers of Willing*.

ling. They maintained, that the Lord Chriſt has two *Natural Wills*, or *Powers of Volition*, becauſe of the Divine and Human Natures; and the Quotations objected (out of the Fathers) by *Macarius*, were to prove *but one Natural Will*, or *Power of Volition:* Therefore when to theſe Quotations the Council anſwers, the Quotations indeed ſpeak of *one Will*, but they mean *the Will of the Divine Perſons*; 'Tis unavoidable, that they believed *but one Natural Will* (or *Power of Willing*) in God, not three Wills.

I may leave it, I think to any man of Erudition and Judgment; Whether this Council did not believe concerning the Divine Perſons, as the Church now does: Namely, that they are *Properties* of the Divine Subſtance, Nature, or Godhead, not diſtinct *Minds*, or numerically different *Beings* and *Spirits*; in that they affirm, that they have but one Natural Will or *Power of Volition.* For 'tis impoſſible, in the nature of the thing; that diſtinct Intellectual Subſtances, three divers Spirits, or Minds, or Beings, ſhould not have each his own *Power of Willing*, or *Natural Will.* I go on, to another Teſtimony.

The *LATERAN* COUNCIL. *Peter Lombard*, Biſhop of *Paris*, commonly called *Maſter of the Sentences*, ſo explained the Trinity of Perſons, and the Unity of God; as to make but one numerical *ſelf ſame Subſtance*, and *three Properties:* And ſo expreſſes himſelf all along, that it appears, he owned but one Divine Spirit or Mind, the Subject (as it were) of *three Properties*, which are called *Perſons*; but are ſo called (in his judgment) very catechreſtically, or improperly. It is true, he owns, that the Divine Perſons are *Tres Entes* (not, *Tria Entia*) and *Perſonæ Subſiſtentes*; but both theſe, only in a Metaphyſical Senſe: Namely, as each Property (or Perſon) is conſidered not barely as a Property, but together with the Divine Subſtance to which it belongs. He explained himſelf

ſelf yet farther, and more clearly, by adding, that the Divine Perſons are ſo much the ſame, in regard of the (common) ſelf-ſame Subſtance in which they ſubſiſt, that we cannot ſay but very improperly that *they differ in number:* they differ not, ſaith he, ſo much as in number, in the ſenſe that Human Perſons (for inſtance, *Socrates* and *Plato)* differ in number.

Joachim, an Abbot of the Province of *Calabria*, in the Kingdom of *Naples*; a Perſon very much eſteemed (for his Learning and Sanctity) by the Popes of *Rome*, and reverenced by moſt people as a Prophet; very much diſliked the (before-mentioned) Explication by *Peter Lombard* the *Pariſian* Biſhop. He publiſhed therefore a Book, wherein he teaches, as our Modern Realiſts do; that the Divine Perſons are different *Subſtances* and *Beings*, that the Unity of the Godhead is not an Eſſential, or Subſtantial, or Natural and Proper Unity, but only a Political and Figurative: Namely, *as many men* are ſaid to be *one People*, or one Nation. The Abbot's Opinion began to grow plauſible, becauſe 'tis an Explication very intelligible and obvious; therefore a General Council being aſſembled at the *Lateran* in *Rome*, *Anno* 1215. though they had before them a great deal of important buſineſs, in the firſt place took into conſideration the (new) Controverſy between the *Maſter of the Sentences* and the *Abbot:* And they determined, as our Oppoſers themſelves confeſs, wholly and expreſly in favour of the former.

When our moſt Learned Countryman, Dr. *Cudworth*, ſays *(Intell. Syſtem. p.* 604.) that this ſame *Lateran* Council is *the only Publick Authority*, that has owned the Explication of the Trinity, by *three Properties, of the ſame Numerical Subſtance:* To omit now, how much he is miſtaken; he ſhould have conſidered, that a General Council is the Supream and laſt Authority in the Church; and that in yielding to us, that we have of our ſide, a General

neral Council, he profeſſed himſelf an *Heretick*. For this is the *formal Reaſon* as they ſpeak, the very Definition of *a Heretick*; that in a Queſtion of Faith, he (knowingly and obſtinately) rejecteth and oppoſeth the deciſion of a General Council. And ſeeing that this Learned man could not but know, that this was a General Council; he ſhould at leaſt have endeavoured, to have ballanced ſo great an Authority, by pretending to ſome of the other General Councils: But Dr. *Cudworth* was an Ingenuous man; his Generoſity and Honeſty would not ſuffer him to lay claim to what, he himſelf knew well, he had no right; he knew, no General Council had ever ſaid *three* Infinite Subſtances, *three* Divine Minds or Spirits.

(2.) From the Catholick Church, declaring her ſelf in General Councils; come we to the particular *Church of England*, ſpeaking in her Articles, and Liturgy.

I ſhall confeſs, that the Articles are not ſo clear; but that a pertinacious Litigant, may elude their true meaning. But when 'tis ſaid, in the *1ſt*, *2d*, and *5th* Articles; that the Second and Third Perſons of the Trinity, are *of one Subſtance with the Father*; and that *all three Perſons are of one Subſtance, Power, and Eternity:* As there can be *but one (Numerical) Eternity*; ſo ſeeing 'tis plain, that the Compilers of the Articles could mean but *one Eternity in number*, we ought to infer, they meant *but one Power*, and *one Subſtance in number*; not as the Realiſts Contend, three diſtinct Subſtances, three Powers, three Omnipotencies.

Would any Realiſt, in accounting for his Faith, concerning the Divine Perſons, ſay; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are *one* Subſtance, *one* Power? Would they not aſſuredly ſay, *three* Infinite Subſtances, *three* Omnipotencies? But ſeing our Church rejects *this*, and ſays one Omnipotence or Power, one Subſtance, as one Eternity;

why ſhould not we underſtand her to mean, as ſhe (ſo expreſly) ſays?

But what our Church means in her Articles, ſhe moſt plainly declares in her Liturgy or Common Prayers.

I omit, that in the Communion Service, our Church uſes the *Nicene Creed*; and therein the term *Homo-ouſios* or *one Subſtance*; by which, I have ſhewn, the *Nicene* Fathers certainly meant *one ſelf-ſame Subſtance*: becauſe of this, I ſeem to have ſaid enough already.

The *Athanaſian* Creed, appointed to be read on ſome principal Sundays and Holy-days, is more definitive, expreſs, and clear than the *Nicene*; let us hear what it ſays.

" Whoſoever will be ſaved, —'tis neceſſary that he " hold the Catholick Faith; —and the Catholick Faith " is this: That we Worſhip one God in Trinity, and Tri- " nity in Unity: neither confounding *the Perſons*, nor " dividing *the Subſtance*. [*Perſons*, he ſaith, in the plu- " ral number; *Subſtance*, in the ſingular. He knew no- " thing of *Subſtances*.] —There are *not three Eternals*, " but one Eternal; as alſo *not three Incomprehenſibles*, but " one Incomprehenſible; —*not three Almighties*, but one " Almighty; *not three Gods*, but one God. It is evident here, that after having declared, that the Perſons are three, and the Subſtance but one; leſt by three Perſons it ſhould be ſuppoſed that three *Minds*, or three *Spirits* are meant: Therefore this Creed as carefully cautioned us, againſt three *Eternals*, three *Incomprehenſibles*, or three *Almighties*; as againſt three *Gods*. If the Creed had intended, as the Realiſts teach; That there are three Almighty Spirits, three Eternal Minds, three Incomprehenſible Subſtances: It would never have ſaid, *not three Almighties, nor three Eternals, nor three Incomprehenſibles*; becauſe ſo, it ſhould (expreſly and in terms) contradict it ſelf. We cannot underſtand, how it ſhould not be a contradiction, to ſay; firſt, there are three Eternal, Almighty, Incomprehenſible

comprehenſible Subſtances, Spirits and Minds: And then, there is but one Eternal, Almighty, or Incomprehenſible. But on the contrary, the Expreſſions of this Creed will be very conſiſtent, and intelligible; if by *Perſons*, we underſtand here, with the Nominals, not ſo many Spirits, Minds or Subſtances, but ſo many *Properties* of the ſame Incomprehenſible Subſtance, and of the ſame Eternal and Almighty Spirit and Mind. For ſeeing thoſe Properties are nothing elſe, but (unbegotten) *original Mind* or Intellect; begotten or *reflex Wiſdom*, reſulting from Original Mind's conſidering or underſtanding the Divine Nature and Perfections; and laſtly *the Love* that proceeds neceſſarily from theſe two: All the Predications of this Creed concerning the three Perſons, or Properties, are fully anſwered. Becauſe though each of theſe (Imminent) Acts of the Deity is Eternal, All-powerful, and *to us* Incomprehenſible, by reaſon of their Infinity; yet no man will ſay, they are three Almighties, or three Eternals, or three Incomprehenſibles: Becauſe thoſe Adjectives are never ſaid alone, except concerning *actual Beings*; not concerning *the Acts* of a Being or Spirit. We may ſay, to put ſomewhat a like caſe; the Power of God is Eternal and Incomprehenſible, and ſo is his Goodneſs: But becauſe Power and Goodneſs are but only *the Acts*, or at moſt *the Properties* of a Being or Spirit; therefore though each of theſe is confeſſed to be Eternal and Incomprehenſible, yet we rightly deny they are two *Eternals*, or two *Imcomprehenſibles*, becauſe that is never ſaid but of Spirits or Beings themſelves.

In ſhort, I conceive; that this Creed, by expreſly denying that the three Divine Perſons are three *Eternals*, *Almighties*, or *Incomprehenſibles*, denies them alſo to be *Beings*, *Minds*, or *Spirits*: For if they were, becauſe each of them is Eternal, Almighty and Incomprehenſible; *all three* muſt be *three* Eternals, Almighties, and Incomprehenſibles. But the Perſons being taken for *Properties*,

though each Property is Eternal, and the reſt; yet (as the Framer of this Creed, rightly obſerves) *the propriety of Speech* will not allow, that they be called *three Eternals*, &c.

'Tis eaſy to foreſee here, a formidable Objection; namely. That 'tis improper alſo, to call *Properties* of Beings, of Spirits or Minds, *Perſons*; more improper, to call ſuch Properties, as *Original Wiſdom*, *reflex Wiſdom*, or the *Love* proceeding from theſe, *God*; and moſt of all, to name them *Father*, *Son* and *Spirit*. 'Tis alſo very odd, to pray as our Church does in the Liturgy; "O God the "Father— have mercy on us, O God the Son— have "mercy on us, O God the Holy Ghoſt— have mercy on us: If theſe are not ſo many actual Beings, and living Spirits; but only the Properties (Original Intellect, reflex Wiſdom, and Divine Love) belonging to one ſelf-ſame Being and Spirit.

To this, I anſwer. Seeing *Words* and *Names* are not the Natural, but the *Arbitrary Signs* or notations of *things*; no Names or Words ought to ſeem improper or harſh, that are impoſed on things by a competent Authority; and are deniz'd (as it were) by general Uſe and Cuſtom. It is unproper, to call Properties *Perſons*, in any other caſe but that before us; becauſe Cuſtom and Uſe are now againſt it: But Cuſtom having warranted it, in our ſpeaking of the Deity; 'tis now no more unproper than the words or terms of Art in Chymiſtry, Navigation, Fortification, and all other Arts, which every one knows are otherwiſe underſtood in theſe Arts than in common familiar Speech. In like manner, when Original Wiſdom is called *the Father* and *God*, reflex Wiſdom is ſaid to *be generated*, and called *God* and the *Son*, and the Spiration of Divine Love is called *the Spirit*; we are not to wonder, that the Scriptures or the Church being conſtrained, to uſe *the Language of men* concerning an Object very inadequate to our limited

mited Underſtandings; we are not (I ſay) to wonder, if in this caſe the Expreſſions, Names, and Terms, are liable to a great deal of exception: But there is no juſt cauſe to reject thoſe Terms or Expreſſions, both becauſe they are as near to the nature of the things ſpoken of, as Human Language affords: And becauſe they are ſo explained by the Church, as not to oppoſe or take away the Unity of God. As to that Prayer, "O God the Father — "have mercy on us, O God the Son —— have mercy on "us, O God the Holy Ghoſt —— have mercy on us: It hath been diſliked by divers Learned men, particularly by Mr. *Calvin*. But 'tis certain, 'tis not the Churches Intention; to own hereby three Spirits, or three Objects of Worſhip: The Object of Worſhip being inconteſtably, and I think confeſſedly, but one. The Church by this Form of Prayer means only, to invocate God by the three Diſtinctions, which ſhe owneth to be in him. And when ſhe names thoſe Diſtinctions, or Properties, Father, Son and Spirit; ſhe intends thoſe words, not as when they are uſed of *men*, or any other *Creatures*, but only in the ſenſe that they are applicable to God. *Father*, when ſaid of God is *Original Intellect*, *Son* is *reflex Wiſdom*, and *Holy Spirit* is *Divine Love*.

Notwithſtanding, becauſe of the common people; who by occaſion of that Form, may entertain Tritheiſtic Notions: Mr. *Calvin* adviſed well, that this, and ſuch like Offenſive Forms be taken away. When I ſay Offenſive, I mean; they are Forms, at which the Ignorant may dangerouſly ſtumble, may eaſily make ſhipwreck of the Faith.

(3.) There is no doubt, that all the *Roman Catholick* Nations and Churches, will adhere (in this Queſtion) to the deciſion of the *Lateran* Council. Thoſe Churches believe themſelves as much bound, by the determination of

of the Church in a General Council; as by the Scripture it ſelf: Becauſe 'tis a Principle with 'em, that the Holy Ghoſt preſides in, and directs General Councils, in all their (final) Concluſions and Canons about the Faith.

The *Greek* Emperor, Patriarchs, and Church were repreſented in that Council, as well as the *Latin* (or *Weſtern*) Kings and Churches; therefore they will imbrace the Creed and Canons of that Council, as much as of any other General Council: Nor in our preſent Queſtion, can they avoid it. For not only the Firſt *Nicene*, but the Sixth General Council at *Conſtantinople*, both of them *Greek*, tho the *Latins* alſo aſſiſted in thoſe Councils; affirmed *but one Subſtance*, and what is more explicit and deciſive, *but one Will* of the three Divine Perſons: as was obſerved before.

Though the Dean of St. *Paul*'s hath ſaid; He will procure any day a Meeting, of as many and able Divines as they of *Oxford*, who ſhall condemn their Decree: I much queſtion, whether he hath yet ſpoke with thoſe Friends of his? I do not think, ſo many and ſo able Divines as the Heads of Colledges at *Oxford*, will be perſuaded to ſo bold and raſh an Attempt; as under their Hands to make a Schiſm from the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches, upon this Queſtion: It was never denied of the *Greek* or *Latin* Church, that they are Orthodox in *the Fundamentals*; the Doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Satisfaction. It would be a very unadviſed, nay deſperate Attempt in private Doctors, to come to *a Subſcription* directly contrary to the Churches of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt*, repreſented in their General Councils; from which thoſe Churches will no more recede, than from the Scriptures themſelves.

Though Proteſtants have not the like veneration for General Councils; as the *Greek* Church, and *Roman Catholick* Nations own and profeſs: Yet ſeeing the *Lateran* Council, which none will deny to be General, decided this

Queſtion

Queſtion concerning one or more Subſtances, not incidentally, but profeſſedly; not caſually, or in looſe general terms, but deſignedly; all Proteſtant (as well as all Catholick) Writers have ever followed the *Lateran* Canon. In all Syſtems, and all Controverſial Books, that I ever ſaw; they deſcribe the H. Trinity by *one ſelf ſame Divine Subſtance, and three Relative Properties*, called *Perſons*. And the Reformed Churches have therefore, upon occaſion, expreſſed their zeal for that Faith; the *Alpine* Churches (who follow the Doctrine of *Calvin* and *Zuinglius*) more eſpecially. Of which, that none may be ignorant, our *Oxford* Friends have given us the Hiſtory of *V. Gentilis*, in *Engliſh*. This Book was originally written by *B. Aretius*, and is a Succinct Account of the (ſevere) Proceedings of the *Alpine* Churches, againſt *Gentilis*. Let us make an Abſtract of the Story of this man, partly from that Book, partly from Mr. *Calvin* and others.

Gentilis, whom Mr. *Calvin* owns to have been a Learned man, having applied himſelf to the reading of the Fathers, had obſerved; that ſome of them ſpeak ſo of the three Divine Perſons, as Subſtances and Spirits numerically diſtinct: And that when theſe Fathers define or deſcribe the Divine Perſons by *Properties*, or *Relations*, or *Modes* of *Subſiſtence*; they mean, that each Perſon beſides his own particular Subſtance, which is perfectly of the ſame Nature with the Subſtances of the other two Divine Perſons, is farther diſtinguiſhed by ſome proper Character of his own; as for inſtance, The Father is *unbegotten*, the WORD (called alſo the Son) is *begotten*, the Spirit *Proceeds* from the other two.

How much ſoever ſome would excuſe, and ſeek to elude it; this Tritheiſtic Notion lies ſo open, in the Writings of Divers of the Fathers, that if *Gentilis* had been condemned for this only; the Complaint of *S. Curcellæus* had been true, that *Gentilis* ſuffered for maintaining the Doctrine

ctrine of ſome of the principal Fathers. But becauſe *Gentilis*, to avoid that Tritheiſm, of which he plainly ſaw that the Doctrine of thoſe Fathers would be accuſed, ſaid; That as there are *three Divine Subſtances*, and *tres Spiritus eſſentiali numero differentes, three eſſentially diſtinct Minds and Spirits*, ſo of theſe, only the firſt *(the Father*, or as *Gentilis* called him *the Eſſentiator)* is truly and properly God, Omnipotent, and Omnipreſent, the other two are but ſubordinate Spirits, dependent *on*, and ſubject *to* the Father or Eſſentiator: This was ſo like *Arius*, and ſo exactly the ſame with what the *Ariani Molles* (the Moderate *Arians)* ſaid, who denied the real Divinity of the Second and Third Perſons; that his Enemies who, it may be, durſt not have condemned him for his Three *Subſtances* and *Spirits*, took advantage againſt him for his affirming that *only the Father is properly and originally God*, and only hath all Divine Perfections *in the higheſt degree*.

For theſe two Points of Doctrine; *three diſtinct Subſtances and Spirits*, whereof *only the firſt is true God*; *Gentilis* was proſecuted, firſt at *Geneva*, and then at *Bern*: at *Geneva* they contented themſelves, to oblige him to Abjure; but at *Bern*, becauſe he would not Abjure, and had Treated of theſe Queſtions (both in his Books and Conferences) in a ſcurrilous manner, they beheaded him. He is not accuſed of being otherwiſe an Ill man, or Unlearned; but thoſe Churches could not indure the Doctrine of *three Infinite Subſtances*, *three Divine Spirits or Minds*.

Let us tarry a little upon this Reflection; That the Churches of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt* muſt needs be underſtood to follow the Deciſions of their General Councils; that all Writers (whether of Syſtems or Controverſy) have alſo followed them, ever ſince the formal Determination made by the Council of the *Lateran*; and that the Reformed Churches of the *Alpine* Provinces, imbraced the very firſt Oppor-

Opportunity of expreſſing their extraordinary Zeal, for the Faith of *one Infinite Subſtance and Spirit, diſtinguiſhed by three Perſonal Properties.* Here is all the Human Authority, that any (Theological) Cauſe can wiſh to have; for whereas all Chriſtendom has from the moſt Ancient times been diſtinguiſhed, into the two Churches of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt*, or the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches: If we could only ſay, that *the Weſt* and *Orient*, notwithſtanding all their other Differences and Controverſies, are however agreed in this, that there is *but one Divine Spirit and Subſtance*; it is (alone) an abſolute Victory, when the Queſtion is, *What is the Faith of the Catholick Church?* For this is what we mean by *the Catholick Church*, we mean nothing elſe (neither more nor leſs) but this, *the Churches of the* Eaſt *and* Weſt. But when it can be farther ſaid, that not only theſe two general Bodies, but even all the particular Writers (whether in the way of Inſtitutions, or of Controverſy) unanimouſly maintain the commonly received Doctrine; for a man to withſtand (pertinaciouſly) ſuch a Conſent as this, is no better nor other than to depart from *the Communion of Saints*; he blots out, with his own hand, his name from *the Matricula* of the Church. What ſignifies that Saying of our Saviour, *Tell the Church*; or that other, *If he heareth not the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen:* If we refuſe to ſubmit to the Church, not only as repreſented by General Councils; but as diffuſed in all the Provinces of the *Eaſt*, and *Weſt*; and as ſpeaking by the Writers of all Sects and Parties? If I were arguing with thoſe who reject the Authority of the Catholick Church, or that make but light of it; I ſhould not urge theſe Authorities, or (at moſt) but only mention them: But ſeeing the *Realiſts* as well as the *Nominals* profeſs, that they will be concluded by the deciſion of the Catholick Church; the Authorities I have urged, are ſufficient (methinks) to eſtabliſh the Point I aim at. For I plead

 the

the Authority of the Church, in all the ways, by which her Doctrine or Faith can be declared and expreſſed: I alledge the Church ſpeaking, firſt, as repreſented by her Biſhops in *General Councils*; then, as repeating the ſame Doctrine by her *Preachers*, *Writers*, and *Divinity-Chairs*; and laſtly, as defending and vindicating the Faith by her *Magiſtracy*, in the actual puniſhment of obſtinate and irreclaimable Diſſenters from it.

(4.) It may ſeem but a light matter, after all this; to alledge the late Decree of the Heads of Colleges at *Oxford*: And it might rightly ſeem ſo, if there were any Univerſity in Chriſtendom that would not make the ſame Decree, if the Queſtion were put to them, "Whether there is "more than one (ſelf-ſame) Infinite Subſtance, or more "than one only Divine Mind and Spirit? But do the Realiſts themſelves hope, there are any *Divinity-Chairs*, or any (Scholaſtick) *Convocations*, who will give up *Homo-ouſios*; or will interpret it, contrary to the Doctrine of *the Schools*, and of *General Councils*? Will any Univerſity tranſlate or explain *Homo-ouſios* (or *of the ſame Subſtance*) by *three Subſtances*? Or if they ſhould forget their Grammar; will they forego their Philoſophy, and the very fundamental Principles of Reaſoning; by (firſt) defining *God*, to be *an Infinite and All perfect Spirit*, and then ſaying, that *three ſuch Spirits are but one God*.

It is but a juſt Deference to Univerſities, to ſay; they are the Conſervatories, of the Catholick and Orthodox Doctrine. Here their Leiſure, Converſation, multitude and variety of Books; and that they attend to this only thing; enable the Profeſſors, Heads of Colleges, and other Doctors, to diſcern more readily, and judge more certainly: than Preachers, incumbred (for the moſt part) with Domeſtick Cares and Croſſes; and taken up, in Compoſing Sermons, and other Practical Diſcourſes; ordinarily

dinarily can. And for this Reaſon, both Magiſtrates and People will always have an eſpecial regard, for the Determinations of thoſe *Bodies Politick of Learning*: As they reverence the *Parochial Clergy*, for their Example, and their holy Counſels; ſo the Clergy of Univerſities will, and ever have been eſteemed the more Authentick Interpreters, of the Divine Myſteries, and the Arcana of Religion.

It is from this opinion of things, without doubt; that his Majeſty hath given forth his late *Directions to the Archbiſhops and Biſhops*. For the Preface to thoſe *Directions*, ſaith; That the Differences among the Clergy in their ways of Expreſſing themſelves, concerning the Trinity, have given occaſion to his Majeſty to command as here followeth. And what follows? Why, the principal Direction is; That "all ſhall carefully avoid *new Terms*, in "ſpeaking of the H. Trinity; and ſhall confine themſelves "to ſuch ways of Expreſſion as have been *commonly uſed* "*in the Church*. Which is in effect to decree again by the Royal Authority, the declaratory Decree of the Doctors at *Oxford*: For 'tis inconteſtable, that *three Infinite Subſtances, three Divine Spirits and Minds*, are *new Terms*, and ways of Expreſſion that have not been *commonly uſed in the Church*; they have been never uſed, ſince the Deciſion by the *Lateran* Council, without incurring the Note of Hereſy.

Hitherto of *Authorities*; come we now to *the Arguments*.

The Arguments of the Nominals.

Here I may be more brief; becauſe the Arguments are ſo apodictical and clear.

In the firſt place, I ſay: three Infinite (Intellectual) Subſtances, or *three* Eternal Omnipotent Minds or Spirits, can never be *but one God*: Becauſe 'tis evident, nay confeſſed,

feſſed, that *one ſuch Spirit, Mind or Subſtance, is one (abſolute and moſt perfect) God.*

If one Infinite Intellectual Subſtance, one Divine Mind or Spirit, is one *compleat* God; how ſhall we ever avoid it, that three ſuch Spirits muſt be three compleat Gods? We intreat the *Realiſts*, that without offending them, for we deſire not to impoſe our Sentiments on them; we may believe, and profeſs, what ſeems to us ſo undeniable: namely, That "if the Definition is multiplied, the thing "defined is alſo therewith multiplied. This is ſuch a *Poſtulatum* in Logick; that it has been ever held equivalent in certainty and clearneſs, to an Arithmetical or Geometrical Demonſtration. But does it not as clearly follow, from that Logical Axiom; that ſeeing 'tis the Definition of one God, that he is one Infinite (Intellectual, Spiritual) Subſtance, one Eternal, Omnipotent and Omniſcient Spirit and Mind: Therefore if we multiply our Definition, by ſaying, "three Infinite (Spiritual, Intellectual) Sub-"ſtances, three Omniſcient, Omnipotent Minds and Spi-"rits; we (thereby) multiply the thing we pretended to define, namely God? Which is to ſay, we affirm more Gods; as many Gods, as ſuch Subſtances and Spirits.

To this, the *Realiſts* have anſwered two different (and contrary) ways.

Mr. *How* ſays; that *one Divine Perſon is not one God.* If he had ſaid this, of ſuch Perſons as the Church means when ſhe ſays *three Divine Perſons*; it had been a good and a ſound Anſwer. But ſeeing by a Divine Perſon, Mr. *How* declares that he means *an Eternal, Omniſcient, Omnipotent, and Infinite Spirit*; a Spirit or Mind *omnimodouſly perfect*; he ought to ſhew, how ſuch a Spirit can fail in its claim of being an *omnimodouſly perfect God*: For 'tis unintelligible, how it ſhould come to paſs, that where *no Perfection*, or *degree of Perfection* is wanting; ſuch a Being or Spirit ſhould not be *a perfect God.*

When

When Mr. *How* requires *three* All-perfect Spirits, to the conſtituting *one* Perfect God; 'tis evident, he might as well have required threeſcore, or three hundred, or (if he had thought of it) three Millions. And if he had thought fit to ſay, three Millions, three Hundred, and Threeſcore ſuch Spirits are (preciſely) one God; yet he would never be able to ſhew, how all theſe (together) make a more Perfect God, than one of them (alone) is: For if that one is Infinite, Eternal, Omnipotent, Omniſcient; he is equivalent to never ſo many ſuch Spirits.

And beſides that this is a clear Anſwer to Mr. *How*'s crude Pretence; his Doctrine is Hereſy to all the other Realiſts: Who all ſee, that unleſs one Divine Spirit is one God, three Divine Spirits can never be one God. The reaſon is; becauſe God being Infinite in his Perfection: If the Divine Perſons *ſingly* conſidered, are not Infinite, but Finite in their Perfection; no three Finites will make an Infinite.

The other Realiſts therefore ſay, That *each* of the three Divine Spirits is *perfect God*. And as for the Conſequence we draw from thence; that *then there muſt be three Gods*: They believe, *they retort our Anſwer* upon our ſelves; thus. If, becauſe *one Divine Mind, or Spirit, or Subſtance* is one Perfect God, three ſuch Subſtances, Minds or Spirits are three Gods: Then, becauſe *each Divine Perſon* is one Perfect God; it muſt alſo follow, that three ſuch *Perſons* are three Gods. And ſo the Nominals are as Knee-deep in Tritheiſm, as the Realiſts.

I anſwer; That this Retortion is grounded on a miſtake of the Churches Doctrine. We do not ſay, as the Realiſts ſuppoſe; that one Divine Perſon is an adequate Notion of God, or of one God: Three Divine Perſons, and not one only, is a Perfect God. We ſay indeed, that each Divine Perſon is *God*; but not *a God*. In ſaying that each Divine Perſon is God, as for inſtance, that the Father *is*

God,

God, nay is *perfect God*; we are far from intending he is *a perfect God*: Becauſe ſuch is the force of the ſmall Particle *a*, that by ſaying *each Perſon is a God*; we ſhould apparently multiply Gods, in affirming three Divine Perſons. What then; why, when the Church ſays each Divine Perſon is *God*, as the Father (for inſtance) is *God*: 'tis meant, that the Father is *God*, *not excluſively (but inoluſively) of the other two Perſons*, namely of the Son and Spirit. The Divine Subſtance or Eſſence conſidered but with one of its *diſtinctive Properties*, is but *an inadequate* Conception of God: The full and compleat Conception is, the Divine Subſtance with the *three* Properties, or Relative Subſiſtences, *Unbegotten Wiſdom*, *Begotten or Reflex Wiſdom*, and *Divine Love*.

It remains therefore firm and ſecure; that if one All-perfect or Divine *Spirit* is one Perfect God, three ſuch Spirits are three Gods. We have ſeen, that the Realiſts can no way ſhift off that Demonſtration; but by ſuch a Retortion on the Nominals, as is a pure miſtake of the Churches Doctrine. But were the Retortion never ſo true and ſound; yet 'tis impertinent: For, how would it excuſe the Tritheiſm of the Realiſts, if they can prove, that others are as much Tritheiſts as themſelves?

Again, *Secondly*. There are three Infinite (Spiritual and Intellectual) Subſtances, three Divine Minds and Spirits; ſay the Realiſts.

Then, ſay *we*; there are alſo three Wills, three Underſtandings, and three Energies or Principles and Powers of Action: This they grant alſo.

I will not here again repeat it, that the Sixth General Council expreſly denies three Wills; and conſequently, three Underſtandings and Energies: I only ask, Whether it be not too apparently unphiloſophical, abſurd, and monſtrous; to conceit *one God, with three Underſtandings*,

ings, three ſeveral Wills, three divers Powers of Action? To what purpoſe are theſe Faculties repeated? If, becauſe one Underſtanding or Energy is *not ſufficient*; then, 'tis not Infinite: But if not Infinite, then (of neceſſity) Finite; if Finite, three Finite Underſtandings or Energies will never make one Infinite Energy or Underſtanding; 'tis only an Infinite number of Finites, and not three only, that can make an Infinite.

But if one Underſtanding and Energy in God, becauſe they are Infinite, *are ſufficient*, which I think to be undeniable; more (Underſtandings or Energies) are ſuperfluous: But we know, there is nothing ſuperfluous in God; all Superfluity or *Redundancy* is Imperfection, nay is *monſtrous.*

One God with three Underſtandings, three Powers of Willing, three Principles of Action: I deſire to ſpeak of the Faith of others, eſpecially of Learned or Good men, with a due reverence; but I beg leave, to make ſome few (ſerious) Remarks on ſo ſtrange a Paradox.

If three Underſtandings, whether Finite or Infinite; I inſiſt upon it, *there muſt be more:* For if *three* are better than *one*, more perfective of the Nature of God; three Hundred Underſtandings muſt make a God 297 times more perfect, than three Underſtandings can. This Hypotheſis therefore of three Underſtandings manifeſtly implies; that God, becauſe he hath *only three Underſtandings*, is not ſo Perfect a God, as he might be; nay as may be conceived by a Finite Underſtanding. I know well, that the Realiſts are better men, than to have ſuch thoughts of God; but then they ought to diſcharge the Notions concerning God, that neceſſarily lead to ſuch Conſequences.

Three Underſtandings, they ſay, and three Wills. But if two of the Underſtandings, and two of the Wills, are not ſteril or *barren*; two parts in three, of the Acts of the Divinity, whether in Underſtanding or Willing, are (moſt plainly)

plainly) fruitleſs and ſuperfluous Acts. Or will they ſay, to avoid that conſequence; that the three Underſtandings and three Wills, do *by turns relieve one another?* But neither muſt that be ſaid, becauſe laſſitude or wearineſs approach not God.

If three Underſtandings and three Energies (that is, Principles of Action) then three Lives alſo. I am perſuaded the verieſt Ruſticks would be aſham'd of ſuch an Affirmation; would ſee the abſurdity and impoſſibility of it; and more eſpecially of *three Lives of the ſame kind.* The Life of an uncompounded Being, can be but one: Degrees of Life (or more vivacity) are incident to Finite Beings; but in God we cannot ſuppoſe, without ſuppoſing him imperfect, ſo much as various degrees of Life.

Three Lives of one Being, is a contradiction: For ſeeing *the being* of a Living Being is its *Life*; to ſay, three Lives of one Being, is to ſay, three Beings are but one Being.

But three Underſtandings, Wills, or Energies of one ſelf-ſame God, is a Paradox ſo fertile of Impoſſibilities and Contradictions, eaſily ſtarted; that I ſhall content my ſelf, only to have put the Reader into a method of diſcovering and conſidering them.

A third Argument, againſt three Infinite Subſtances, three Divine Spirits and Minds, is; that *the Predications* concerning the Third Divine Perſon, that have been defined in General Councils, and believed by the Church, can conſiſt or be explicated only on the Hypotheſis of the Nominals, that the Divine Perſons are *Properties* and *Immanent Acts*, not Subſtances or Spirits. The Church believes, that the Second Perſon is *eternally generated*, and that the Third doth *eternally proceed* from the Firſt and Second. The Second General Council of *Lyons*, aſſembled in the Year 1274. defines in the firſt Canon; *Damnamus*

&

& Reprobamus, &c. "We condemn and reject all ſuch "Perſons as preſume to deny, that the H. Spirit doth *eter-* "*nally proceed* from the Father and the Son; for this hath "been the Faith of the Orthodox *Fathers*, and of the "Doctors of the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches. 'Tis evident at firſt ſight to any Learned man, who is converſant in theſe Queſtions, and in the Writers who (in ſeveral Ages) have managed 'em, what the Fathers of this Council meant, and what they aimed at, in this Decree or Canon. For becauſe they believed, that the Divine Perſons are not Minds and Spirits, but *Relative Subſiſtences*; or what is the ſame, *Immanent Acts*: Therefore they could not but believe and define, that the Second Perſon is *eternally* generated, and therefore called the *Son*; that the Third is an *Eternal* Spiration, and therefore called *Spirit*.

The three Divine Perſons are, *Original Mind* or Wiſdom; *Reflex Wiſdom*, or the Wiſdom that reſulteth from *Original Mind's* eternal contemplation and knowledge of the Divine Nature and Perfections; and *the everlaſting ſpiration of Love*, that muſt needs *proceed*, from the *Original* and *Reflex* Wiſdom of the Deity. This being the Faith of the Church, profeſſed by the Fathers, and by the Doctors of the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches; therefore the Council here defines, that the Spirit doth *eternally proceed*: That is, the Proceſſion of the Spirit, or of the Divine Love, is an Immanent *(an abiding) Act*; not a tranſient Act, that has been compleated and finiſht from all Eternity.

The Doctrine of the Nominals then, agrees with, and was the Foundation of this Canon of the *Lyons* Council: the Council defines that the Spirit doth *eternally proceed*, and the Second Perſon is *eternally generated*; becauſe the Second Perſon is *the Wiſdom* that reſults, from Original Mind's *eternal contemplation* and knowledge, of the Divine Perfections; and becauſe the Third Perſon is the *Everlaſting Spiration*, of Eternal Love, from Original Mind and

Reflex Wisdom. I say, thus *the Predications* concerning the Divine Persons, defined in General Councils, are not only adequately answered *by*; but they are also grounded *on* the Explication of the Nominals, that the Divine Persons are not Substances and Spirits, but Original Mind, Reflex Wisdom, and Divine Love.

The Explication by the Realists, is directly contrary to the Canon of this General Council: For if the Second and Third Persons are distinct Substances and Spirits, from the First; it were heinous Nonsense to say, they are eternally generated, or eternally proceed. If the Persons are Substances and Spirits, it must be said, That the Second was *compleatly* and *finally* generated from all Eternity; the like also of the Third Person: else they should be *incompleat* Substances, *unfinisht* Spirits. The *Character* of the Second Person is *Generation*, of the Third is *Proceeding*; therefore if they are Spirits or Substances, it can never be said, that one is *eternally* generated, the other does *eternally* proceed: But the former *was* generated from all Eternity, and the other actually and compleatly proceeded from all Eternity; else their Character and Being is still uncompleat; which to say of a Divine Person, is Heresy.

Nor may I omit, that because the Catholick Church believes, that the Second Person is the *reflex Wisdom* of God, and the Third *Divine Love*; therefore this Question has been very warmly debated; "*Whether the Son is that Wis-*
"*dom, by which the Father is wise?* Those Fathers who affirm this Question, usually alledge these two Arguments. That the Eternity of the Son cannot be otherwise proved, but by this; that *he is the eternal Wisdom of the Father.* And that otherwise we must suppose *two Wisdoms* in God: Which seems so absurd to a late Learned Ecclesiastical Historian, that he concludes his Dissertation concerning this Question, with these words; "The Father neither is, nor
"can be *actually Wise*, but by the WORD or Son. *J. Cabbasutius*

Basilius Notitiæ Eccles. p. 120. Every one sees, that this Question which has been so earnestly debated among Fathers, School-men and Moderns, were absolute Nonsense; if they supposed the Divine Persons to be *Substances* and *Spirits:* The very putting the Question implies this Supposition, that by the First Person is meant *original Mind*; and by the Second *reflex Wisdom*; for a Substance or Spirit cannot be said to be *the Wisdom by which the Father is wise*; the Wisdom by which *Original Mind* is wise, must be *an Act*, an Eternal Immanent Act of Original Mind, not a Spirit, a Mind, or a Substance.

I might go on to the next Argument; were I not stopped by a Pretence of the Realists, on which they lay a great stress: It has also very lately been earnestly urged, by a most Learned Person, of the first Order in the Church. Whereas we alledge, That *the Predications* concerning the Divine Persons cannot be accounted for, on the Hypothesis of the Realists. For instance, That the Son is *eternally* generated, and the Spirit *eternally* proceeds; this can never be explicated by an Hypothesis which makes the Divine Persons to be three Substances, or three Spirits; because if the Second and Third Persons are Spirits and Substances, it ought not to be said *they are eternally generated*, or *they eternally proceed*, but thus they *have been generated*, or *they proceeded*, from all Eternity: If the Second Person is still generated, and the Third still proceeds; they are hitherto (nay ever shall be) imperfect and *incompleat Beings*, because their Characters (Generation and Procession) are *not yet finished*. I say, whereas this is our Objection; some Realists have answered: The Son and Spirit are Substances, and yet are *eternally* and *perfectly* generated; because they have their Substances by a continual *Aporrœa* or efflux from the Substance of the Father. In two words, the Second and Third Persons are *emanatory Substances, or Spirits*; and therefore the former is *eternally* generated, and the other *eternally*

proceeds. They explain this, by the emanation of the Rays, from the Sun; which always are, and yet are continually and eternally generated.

But this Subtlety has this unhappineſs; that there lies againſt it, a Mathematical Demonſtration. The Realiſts ſay, the Divine Perſons are three Infinite Subſtances; whereof the Second, and the Third emane (or flow) from the Firſt. I urge therefore, Let A. B. C. be three Infinite Subſtances; if B. and C. (Infinite Subſtances) emane from A. an Infinite Subſtance alſo: It is ſelf-evident, that the *two* Infinite Subſtances muſt exhauſt, and thereby (in the end) annihilate the *one* Infinite Subſtance. One Infinite Subſtance (whether corporeal or incorporeal) can never eternally ſupply two Infinite Subſtances; the two Infinite Subſtances by continual eternal emanation, muſt needs dry up the one, which was their Fountain.

Beſides, as Emanatory Subſtances are indeed maintained, by a continual new efflux and recruit from their Fountain; ſo the reaſon of this, is, becauſe all Emanatory Subſtances are *continually decaying*; they continually periſh, as well as are continually generated: And otherwiſe, there would be no need of an eternal efflux, or *continually new emanation*, from their Fountain. For inſtance, 'Tis becauſe the Rays that emane from the Sun, or from a Candle, continually die and waſte away; that therefore thoſe Bodies (the Sun and a Candle) ſupply that decay and waſte, by a continual efflux, or emanation of new Rays, from their own Subſtances.

This Reflection ſhould make the Realiſts aware, how dangerouſly they ſay, the Second and Third Perſons of the Trinity are Emanatory Subſtances; for that is to ſay, as they are eternally generated, ſo they eternally waſte or die; and if it were not for this latter, the former would not (nay, could not) be.

But

But the Faith of the Church, is, on the contrary; that the Second and Third Perſons are eternally generated, not becauſe (like Rays) they naturally die as faſt as they are generated: But becauſe their Generation is an immanent or *eternal Act*.

Briefly, Never were men ſo unlucky; as the Realiſts are, in accounting for the Faith of the Church (as it has been defined in General Councils) concerning *the Predications*, that belong to the Second and Third (Divine) Perſons. They can no ways explain the Eternal Generation of the one, or the Eternal Proceſſion of the other; but by ſaying they are Emanatory Subſtances, which like Rays of Light from a Candle, are always recruited from their Fountain. Which Solution, I have ſhewn, ſuppoſes; that the two emaning Perſons eternally die, as well as are eternally generated: And it overlooks this fatal Conſequence, from it; That the Second and Third Perſons, being two Infinites, muſt exhauſt and annihilate the Firſt, which is but one, by their eternal emanation from it. And how can two Infinite Subſtances emane from one? Is it not all one, as to ſay, *two are no more than one*; or two may emane from one, and yet one be left? I conclude therefore; that there cannot readily be a greater Inadvertence, than to ſay, the Second and Third Divine Perſons are *Emanatory Subſtances* from the Firſt.

The *Fourth* Argument may be; that all Explications, by which 'tis indeavour'd to ſhew, How three Infinite (Intellectual) Subſtances, three Almighty Spirits and Minds, may be one God, are manifeſtly deficient.

That theſe Spirits are ſuppoſed to be *mutually conſcious*, that is, conſcious to one another's Thoughts and Actions; their *mutual love* and concurrence; their *conſent in governing the World*; their *mutual Inexiſtence*, or that they immeate, pervade, or *are in one another*: Theſe are ſuch

Pleas,

Pleas, as plainly shew; that the Realists do not believe there is but one God *in a natural sense*, but only in an Artificial. It will be always evident, to all that do not affect to cheat themselves; that were it true, that there are three Infinite All-perfect Spirits which are *mutually conscious*, or *mutually inexist*, or who *mutually love* one another, or that *agree in governing the World* by one Administration: Yet because each of these Spirits are said to be Infinite, and All-perfect, they must be said to be *Gods mutually conscious, mutually inexisting*, and the rest; but no more *one God*, than they are *one Spirit*.

The Realists may as well pretend, that by these Devices of theirs, they have contrived three Infinite Spirits into one Person, or into *one Spirit*, as into *one God*. If a man should affect to advance a new Heresy; by saying, there is *but one Divine Person*, because the three Divine Spirits *mutually love, mutually inexist*, or are *mutually conscious*: Whatever Answers would overthrow such a Novelty in *the Churches Language* concerning God, must overthrow also what the Realists say; namely, That three Gods are made to be one *by their Inexistence*, their *Concurrence*, their *mutual Consciousness*, and such like.

Is this the Faith that we have received, from the Catholick Church, and our Predecessors in the Sacred Function; that God is not one, in a sense of Nature, as when we say one *Sun*, one *Angel*, or any the like Being or thing that is truly and properly one? but in a Factitious or Artificial sense, as Forty thousand men are one Army, or as ten times that number may be one Nation?

They say, three Almighty Spirits are one God; because they mutually inexist, or mutually love. But what if others shall lay hold of this, and contend; that in very deed there are *three Gods*, but yet such Gods as mutually love, mutually inexist, and the rest of that Cant? Would not a disinteressed Person, who at all understands propriety of

of Speech, ſide with theſe latter? Would not ſuch a Perſon aſſuredly anſwer, that the latter (not the former) underſtand *how to ſpeak properly?*

It may be worth the Realiſts while, to conſider the Scandal brought upon the common Chriſtianity; by ſuch poor and deſpicable Excuſes for our Polytheiſm: What would a *Philoſopher*, a *Jew*, or a Learned *Pagan* ſay; when he is adviſed to believe *three Infinite Spirits*, whom he is to call *one God* becauſe they dearly love one another, or becauſe they adminiſter the World by a joint concurrence; or becauſe they cloſely claſp, nay are (even) *in* one another, and know one another's Thoughts and Minds? I think verily, the Philoſopher would laugh out; and if he were a *Greek*, would anſwer with abundance of Railery. The *Jew* would grin, and turn him ſcornfully away; the Saturnine Genius of his Nation, would not allow him, to anſwer. The Pagan would thoroughly approve the whole Diſcourſe; proteſting only, that his own way of ſpeaking (even *three Gods*) is the only proper in the caſe. He would like well of the great dearneſs and great intimacy, called *mutual Love* and *mutual Conſciouſneſs*; he would approve of the *joint Adminiſtration*, he would not diſallow *the Inexiſtence* of Spirits in one another: But (for common ſenſe ſake, and not to make himſelf ridiculous) he would adhere to his own form, *three Gods.*

My laſt Argument, for the preſent, againſt the Doctrine of three Infinite Subſtances, Spirits or Minds, ſhall be; That all the Reaſons, uſed by Philoſophers or Divines, to prove that there is but one God, do as certainly and as clearly prove that there can be but one Infinite All-perfect Spirit. The Learned Author who has anſwered to Dr. *S——th*'s Animadverſions on Dr. *Sherlock*, ingages *(p. 92.)* that if Dr. *S——th* or any other will ſhew; that the Arguments which *Militate* againſt a *plurality of Gods*, are

are equally ſtrong againſt *three Infinite Minds*? He (that Anſwerer) will reply, as ſoon as it can be reaſonably expected, that an Anſwer can be printed off. I ſhall confeſs my ſelf a very unequal match, for ſo Learned an Antagoniſt as Mr. *J. B.* but ſeeing *to be confuted*, with me amounts to no more but this, *to be better informed*: I ſhall even intreat this Gentleman, as his leiſure ſhall ſerve him, to make good his Undertaking and Promiſe. The Task on my part, is very eaſy; I have nothing to do, but to turn to ſome Author or Authors, who have abridged the *Arguments againſt Heatheniſm*, that is, a plurality of Gods: And to preſent them to Mr. *J. B.* who was ſo intent upon utterly routing Dr. *S—th* and the *Oxford* Heads, that he would not divert to the conſideration of thoſe Arguments.

Firſt. I find 'tis alledged by the Defenders of Chriſtianity, againſt Paganiſm; that created Nature has nothing needleſs, or in vain, much leſs can we ſuppoſe, that the uncreated Divine Nature hath ought that is ſuperfluous and redundant: Every Superfluity is a Monſtroſity; what is redundant is a peccancy againſt Wiſdom, Order, and Beauty. But now is it not a Superfluity, ſay they, to ſuppoſe more Gods; when (becauſe one is ſufficient) more Gods are needleſs, and wholly in vain?

Mr. *J. B.* may, if he pleaſes, endeavour to overthrow this Argument; but if he cannot, I am certain, 'tis as applicable to three All-perfect, All-ſufficient Spirits, as to three Gods. For, I pray, are not more Infinite Spirits, *All perfect* and *All-ſufficient* Spirits, wholly needleſs; when 'tis ſelf-evident, that one Spirit who is really All-ſufficient and All-perfect, is enough to all purpoſes and intents whatſoever? If there were Ten Millions of ſuch Spirits, could they do more, or do it more eaſily or more perfectly; than one *All-ſufficient* Spirit will? Nor is there, I think,

think, any Demonſtration in all the Mathematicks, more certain or more clear than this; That if *one* is All-ſufficient, *more* are needleſs.

I imagine, Mr. *J. B.* will have a very hard task of it, to prove; That there is any thing ſuperfluous, and monſtrous in the Divine Nature: Nay I well hope, that all Promiſes notwithſtanding; he is a better man, than to undertake it. But I dare to avow, 'twill be wholly impoſſible to evince; if there can be but one God, becauſe one is ſufficient, and more are ſuperfluous: That it will not follow, that if one All-ſufficient Spirit is enough, more are needleſs and in vain; and conſequently that they cannot be ſuppoſed, without (impiouſly) introducing *a monſtroſity* into our Conceptions of the Divinity.

2. Again, they argue; The multiplicity of Beings of any ſort, ariſes only from the weakneſs, imperfection and unſufficiency, (in ſome regard or other) of thoſe Beings. Either they are mortal; and therefore their ever decaying numbers want to be recruited, by a new Succeſſion. Or none of them is (alone) ſufficient, to ſupply his own wants, and to be a comfort to himſelf; without the concurrence of more, and aſſociation with more. Or more than one is required, if not to himſelf; yet for the comfort and ſupport of other Beings. Where-ever there is a plurality of Beings of the ſame kind, ſome or other of theſe before-mentioned, is the cauſe of it: But God is free from all theſe Defects; he alone is ſufficient for himſelf, and for all other Beings; and becauſe he never dieth, there is no need of another or others to ſupply his place.

In ſhort, We cannot imagine more Gods; becauſe, of thoſe Imbecillities and Defects, which occaſion plurality of Beings of any kind, none of them are incident to God. To ſuppoſe more Gods, without aſſigning ſome *final Cauſe* for ſuch a ſuppoſition, is to imploy our Fancy and Invention, not to exerciſe our Reaſon; 'tis to amuſe our ſelves

with Conceits and Chimera's, not to Philoſophize. You imagine more Gods, without giving a reaſon; whether final, or declaratory: You ought to know, the proper name for this, is *Whimſy*.

I ſhall ask now; Whether this Argument is not alike forcible, againſt the Hereſy of three Infinite All-ſufficient Spirits: as againſt the Impiety of three Gods? For by ſaying, as the Realiſts do, that *every one of the three Spirits is All-perfect, and All-ſufficient*; they grant, that none of the Imperfections, that are the Reaſons why Beings of the ſame kind are multiplied, is found in him: ſo that to ſuppoſe more ſuch Spirits, is a pure Suppoſition, a figment of the Imagination or Fancy; not the product of Reaſon and good Conſideration. Each of the three Spirits, they ſay, is All-ſufficient and All-perfect; he dies not, he needeth no other either to ſupport, or to comfort him, and he (alone) is All-ſufficient for all other Beings: Then, ſay I, more ſuch Spirits are as precariouſly (becauſe they are cauſeleſly) ſuppoſed, as more Gods.

3. It hath been alledged by Divines, and Philoſophers, with great judgment; that indeed the Exiſtence of a God is manifeſted to Mankind, in the high Wiſdom and the admirable Contrivance, that is ſeen in the whole, and parts of the World: And that this Manifeſtation was neceſſary, both to the Comfort of Men, and the Honour of God. *To the Honour of God*; that his Creature might thereby be excited, to pay that Adoration; which is due to the moſt Conſummate, as well as Supream Being. *To the Comfort of Men*; that in all Diſtreſſes and Fears, we might be ſupported with this Reflection: That the Parent and King of the World, is All-wiſe, and All-powerful; and therefore able, to turn every Event into Good, to ſuch *whoſe heart is perfect with him.* As theſe are the Reaſons, the firſt eſpecially, Why God has manifeſted himſelf to his Creatures, by his Works; ſo were there more than

one

one God, whom we ought to adore, and to whoſe Providence and Favours we are indebted: It follows, *for all the ſame Reaſons*, that this alſo would have been ſome way diſcovered to us, in the nature and quality of their Works. There are a thouſand Significations, in the Works of Creation, that God is; but not the leaſt intimation, by them, or any other ways, that there are more Gods than one: Seeing therefore the Works of God were made, to diſplay his Perfections to *the Rational part* of the Creation; we rightly infer, that becauſe thoſe Works diſcover to us, only this, that there is *a* God, we ought to believe no farther than is declared to us, namely that *a* God (or *one* God) there certainly is.

I ever thought this, a very ſolid Reaſoning; I know not, what it may ſeem to Mr. *J. B.* but if he cannot deny 'tis a ſound Proof *(to us)* of the Unity of God; I am well ſatisfied, that it is as direct, againſt our profeſſing more Infinite and All-ſufficient Spirits. Of one ſuch Mind or Spirit, the Works of Creation (ſo full of Beauty, Order, and Deſign) are a clear Demonſtration; but they ſhew us not the leaſt footſteps or track of more ſuch Spirits and Minds. To diſcover to us one ſuch Spirit and Mind, was the primary reaſon of their Creation; therefore if there were more, *that* alſo would have been made known to us, either by the Works, or Providences, that are viſible *to all*; becauſe all are concerned to know it.

And this Conſideration alſo preoludes the Realiſts, from pretending: That their belief of three Infinite Spirits, though 'tis not founded *on the Works of Creation or of Providence*, yet has been taught *to us* (of theſe laſt Ages, and of theſe parts of the World) *by a Revelation*; that is to ſay, in H. Scripture. For all (of all Ages and Places) being equally concerned to know, how many *Gods*, and how many *Supream Spirits*, there are; the knowledge whether there are one or more ſuch Spirits, is not to be

ſought in a particular Revelation, peculiar but to ſome few, but in the Works and Providences which lie open to all: Becauſe, I ſay, all are concerned in this knowledge.

So much of true Religion, as is really neceſſary, either to the knowledge, and (acceptable) Worſhip of God; or to the practice of the Duties of converſation: All this is either very viſible and legible, in *the Works*, or *the Providences* of God; or is radically in us, by connate, congenit Knowledge, or as Divines ſpeak *Natural Conſcience*. The Realiſts therefore ſhould in vain pretend, that their Doctrine of three Divine Spirits is grounded on Revelation; for 'tis a Point of ſo much importance, and ſo general concernment, that were it true, it muſt have been found where all other *neceſſary parts of Religion*, are regiſtred; in the Works of Creation, or the Methods of Providence, or the congenit Notions which are inſeparable from our Rational Natures.

But would the Realiſts appeal to Revelation, would they be judged by it; in this Queſtion, Whether God is one or more Spirits? Our Saviour himſelf will anſwer, *God is* (not three Spirits, but) *a Spirit*, John 4. 24.

I leave theſe Arguments with Mr. *J. B.* who has promiſed to ſatisfy them. When he does, I will thank him: In the mean time, I eſteem him, as of the moſt ſufficient, for any great Undertaking in (Theological) Learning,

The Exceptions, and Defence by the Realiſts.

But the Realiſts tell us,

1. That the Explication of the Trinity, or what the three Divine Perſons are, given by *the Nominals*; as they have learned from Dr. *Cudworth* to call us: I ſay, They tell us, that our Explication is a bare-faced yielding the long-controverted Queſtion of the Trinity, to the *Sabellians* and *Samoſatenians*; and conſequently to the *Socinians*, who

who differ in nothing from *Noetus*, *Sabellius*, and *Paul* of *Samosata*. The God of the *Sabellians* and *Socinians*, and the God (or pretended, *verbal Trinity*) of *the Nominals*, is perfectly the same: The latter have explained away the Trinity, to the Former; the *three* Divine Persons of the Nominals, do all make but the *one* Divine Person of the *Socinians* and *Sabellians*.

The Trinity of the Nominals is one single Being, one individual Substance, one particular Mind, one solitary Spirit. The *Socinians* and *Sabellians* say the very same thing, of their *one* Divine Person.

The Trinity believed by the Nominals, hath but one Understanding, Will, or Energy; in number: It hath but one single Omnipotence, or other Divine Perfection. And this too, is what the *Sabellians* and *Socinians* contend for; the very Mark at which they aim.

Again, The Nominals say, There are three Divine Persons; who are not *living* Beings, or *really Existing* Spirits, but three Properties, otherwise called Relations, or Modes of Subsistence: namely, the Divine Substance with the three Properties, those manifestly contradictory Properties, *to be of none*, to be *begotten*, and to *proceed*. The *Socinians* smile; and crie, *miserable trifling*: But these being words, without any sense belonging to them; no ways, destroying the Unity of God, but implying just nothing at all; we (for Peace sake) can submit to 'em.

And when the Nominals add; That *Original Wisdom* in the Godhead or God, is the Person of *the Father*; Reflex Wisdom (or *the Image* begotten by Original Wisdom's contemplating and understanding the Divine Nature and Perfections) is *the Son*; and *the Spiration* Breathing or Love, by which God willeth himself, is *the Spirit*. The *Socinians* answer; Ay, ay, we believe just so: we never doubted, that there is in God *Original Wisdom*; or that he *understandeth*, and *willeth* (that is, loveth) himself.

To

To what purpose, say the Realists, hath Dr. *S—th*, in his Preface to *Tritheism charged on Dr.* Serlock, said; "The Trinity is such a distinguishing Article of Christi-"anity, that without it, a man can no more be a *Christian*, "than without a Rational Soul he can be a *man?* For 'tis self evident, that he and his Party of Nominals, are *Sabellian* and *Socinian* all over: The *Socinians* believe *as much* as he, or the Heads of Colleges that second him, and he and his Friends *as little* as the *Socinians*, concerning *a real Trinity*.

And though the Nominals, because they affect to ingage in a Question, the which they understand not at all, see not their Syncretism with the *Socinians*; yet the *Socinians* (all) see it, and profess it in their late Books: Particularly, in both their Pamphlets of *Considerations on the Explications and Defences of the Trinity*; and their *Discourse concerning the Nominal and Real Trinitarians*.

This is *an Invidious* Objection; but therein, consists the whole strength of it. 'Tis the Exception made by the *Arians* and *Tritheists*, against the Fathers of the first *Nicene Council*, who stood for the term *Homo-ousios*. By which, they meant, that the Divine Persons have *the self-same Substance in number*; and which, though after a hard struggle, they got inserted into *the Nicene Creed*.

The well-known (and by all approved) Historian, *Socrates Scholasticus*, has informed us; that those who maintained *Homo-ousios*, or that the Divine Persons have *the self-same Substance*, were upbraided as *Sabellians*, by the Party which disliked that term. *Hist. Eccl. l.* 1. *c.* 23. But all know, that none but *Arians* and *Tritheists* were against Consubstantial, or *of the self-same Substance*; and that it was the Orthodox Party, and the *Nicene* Council it self, that stood for *Homo-ousios*. Therefore, whereas the Realists object to us, that we are *Sabellians*; 'tis the old Calumny upon

upon the *Nicene* Council, and objected to both for the ſame reaſon; namely, Becauſe we believe that the Deity, or Perſons of the Trinity, ſubſiſt *in one only and ſelf-ſame Spiritual Subſtance*; and becauſe this implies, that God is but *one individual Spirit, one ſingle Mind.*

As to the *Socinians*, ſeeing our Oppoſers themſelves confeſs, that they are the ſame with the *Sabellians*; they are as impertinently objected to *Us*, as the *Sabellians* were to our Predeceſſors, the Fathers of the *Nicene* Council. Why are we told, we give up the Catholick Faith to the *Socinians*; when we ſo eaſily prove, that the Faith of one only Divine Subſtance, one Infinite Mind and Spirit, was the Belief and Profeſſion of the *Catholick Church*, ſo many Ages before *Socinus* was born, or the *Socinians* mentioned?

If the *Socinians* after long canvaſing the Queſtion, have found, and are content to own; that one Infinite Spirit, one Eternal, Spiritual Subſtance, one All-wiſe Mind, is their very Faith: And that the Properties of the Divine Subſtance, called Perſons, may be admitted and profeſſed, *as interpreted by the Church*; it cannot be ſaid, that the Church has given up any thing, but that the *Socinians* never meant to oppoſe the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, but the particular Error of *the Realiſts*, whom they miſtook to be the Church.

'Tis no ſurprize at all to me, that contending Parties ſhould oppoſe one another as Hereticks, upon a miſtake of each other's Doctrine; or that Time, and long ſifting of things by able and diligent Perſons, ſhould Aſſoyl Difficulties and Controverſies, that ſeemed inſuperable and unreconcilable. The ground, on which the *Engliſh Unitarians* build their Affirmation, that their Doctrine concerning God and the Perſon of our Saviour, differs not from the Doctrine of the Church, is; that the Church believes but one Infinite Subſtance, one Supream Being,

one.

one Omnipotent and Omniſcient Mind and Spirit; as alſo that none of the Divine Attributes, is more than once in the Deity; that there is but one Underſtanding, but one Will, and one Energy in God: For this, ſay the *Socinians*, is our Doctrine; and what we call *one Perſon*, namely one ſubſiſting or *phyſical Perſon*. Let it therefore be ſhewn, that one Infinite Mind, Subſtance and Being, with but one Intellect, Will and Power of Action, was not always the Doctrine of the Church; not only before the *Socinians*, but before the *Sabellians* or the *Noetians*, were named among men: Or that it hath not, in like manner, been the open Profeſſion of all Writers; whether of Inſtitutions, or Controverſy; ſince (and notwithſtanding) the Riſe and Pretences of *Socinus* and the Party from him named.

Our *Engliſh Socinians* Claim, in their late Writings; that they are the Diſcoverers, that the Feud between the Church and them, was ill-grounded: For that in very deed Both ſay the ſame thing. As they pretend to this Honour, ſo they are ſufficiently paid; in that themſelves have the whole benefit of it: they may injoy thereby that Peace and Tranquillity, that Eaſe and Security, from the Laws themſelves; which they before owed to the Indulgence, or the Connivance of Princes and Magiſtrates.

And why is it ſaid in the Objection; that the Properties of the Divine Nature, which we call Perſonalities, are contradictory Properties? For to be *of none*, to be *begotten*, and to *proceed*, are not intended of the Divine Subſtance it ſelf; which is neither *begotten*, nor *proceeds*.

The difficulty, intended in this Objection, wholly diſappears; ſo ſoon as the Realiſts are made to underſtand the terms we there uſe. For *Original Mind*, or the Perſon of the Father, is *unbegotten*; the *Logos*, or *reflex Wiſdom*, becauſe it reſults from Original Mind's contemplating and underſtanding the Divine Perfections, is apparently generated or *begotten*; and the *Love*, by which God willeth himſelf,

himſelf, muſt needs *proceed* from both theſe, namely from *Original Mind* and *Reflex Wiſdom* They are therefore, not only, not Contradictory Properties, which in God the Church hath called *Perſons* and *Perſonalities*; but they *actually* are in the Divine Nature and Subſtance, nay they are *neceſſarily* there, and *from all Eternity*.

2. One may foreſee, that another Objection will be made; and I have met it, more than once, in Converſation: 'tis this. The Predications, or (as others ſpeak) Attributions given in H. Scripture and by the Catholick Church, to the Divine Perſons, ſeem not well to conſiſt, or to be intelligible; on the Hypotheſis or *Explication* of the Nominals.

For inſtance, The Son or Second Perſon of the Trinity is (both in H. Scripture and by the Catholick Church) called *God*; we ſay, he was *Incarnate, and all things were made by him*: In ſome places an Omnipreſence, in others Omniſcience and Omnipotence, are aſcribed to him. But how can we (with any tolerable propriety) ſay; that a mere *Reflex Wiſdom* is God, created all things, was Incarnate, is Omnipotent, Omniſcient or Omnipreſent: Or how can any of theſe things be affirmed of, or applied to our Saviour; in regard of the Incarnate or Inhabiting *Logos*, or *Reflex Wiſdom*? The which alſo, how it ſhould be Incarnate, will be another unaccountable, unintelligible Paradox.

To this ſerious and very weighty Exception, I Anſwer, *Firſt*. I am perſuaded, we ſhould do well to conſider the Interpretations of the Texts, wherein theſe things are ſaid, or ſeem to be ſaid; to conſider well, I ſay, the Interpretations of thoſe Texts, by thoſe *Critical Interpreters*, who are moſt eſteemed in the Catholick Church. The Critical Interpreters have (for the moſt part) underſtood thoſe Texts otherwiſe; than the Writers of Controverſies, are willing to do. I reckon, that an Interpreter is to be heard, before our common Writers of Controverſy: And that a Divine, or other Enquirer into the Sacred Truths, is to form his Judgment,

by Converſation in the Interpreters; not from Controverſial Writers, good for nothing but to tell Learners what Queſtions are debated, and what Chapter, Verſe or Period of the Sacred Text is alledged either as *a Proof*, or *an Objection*; that is, good for nothing but to ſend one to the Interpreters on ſuch a Chapter, Verſe or Period.

The Interpreter obſerves the Context, the parallel Texts, the various Readings; the Ancient Tranſlations, that were made from better Copies than any we now have: He conſiders, that ſometimes things are ſpoken Figuratively, ſometimes Alluſively, ſometimes Catachreſtically. In a word, The Rules of Criticiſm; thoſe already mentioned, and many more; being judiciouſly applied, make *the Interpreter* to deſerve the name of *a Divine*. But Writers of Controverſy go (uſually) in a very different method, to this; they take only ſome ſhreds of the Sacred Text; and moſt commonly, as it lays in ſome (very partial) Tranſlation: And from the mere ſound of thoſe few words, cut off from their Context; they pronounce and define concerning the greateſt and moſt Important Queſtions, and Difficulties in Divinity.

It were eaſy, to make ſuch an application of this Reflection; as would (perhaps) offend many, but would (for all that) be moſt true: I ſhall content my ſelf to ſay, in general; That we ſhall ſee, that the Predications or Attributions given to our Saviour in Scripture, perfectly agree with the Explication of the Nominals; if upon the Texts, where thoſe Attributions or Predications are found, we do but conſult ſuch Interpreters as Dr. *Hammond*, Mr. *Calvin*, *Maldonate*, *Menochius*, *Tirinus*, *Salmero*, *Eraſmus*, *Grotius*. If theſe Critics have not been *alike* conſiderate, and happy, upon *all* the Texts, that the Realiſts would alledge: Yet from them all, eſpecially from *Eraſmus*, *Grotius*, Dr. *Hammond* and Mr. *Calvin*, it will be eaſy to preſent the Realiſts with ſuch an Interpretation of the Sacred Texts; as not only agrees with, but was (I doubt not) grounded on the Expli-

Explication of the Nominals. That is, theſe Writers have thus interpreted; becauſe they underſtood the Doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Divinity of our Saviour, not in the ſenſe of the Realiſts; but as the Nominals (that is, the Church) do.

In ſhort, I ſay, we are not bound to underſtand all the Texts, that the Realiſts would object to us under this Branch of Controverſy; as the Realiſts, and ſome warm Writers of Polemics, take 'em: We will interpret the Texts they ſhall object to us, as they have been interpreted by a great number of the beſt Critics, and moſt celebrated and allowed Interpreters of the Church. And we will ſupport our Interpretation, by the beſt and ſureſt Rule of Criticiſm and Interpretation; *the nature and poſſibility of the thing in queſtion.*

If the foregoing Anſwer ſeem too general; I anſwer again, Secondly. Let us diſtinguiſh the two Natures in Chriſt, the Divinity and the Humanity; and rightly underſtand the Doctrine of the Incarnation: And we ſhall find immediately, how to ſatisfy the (before-ſaid) Objection of the Realiſts. As to the Incarnation, every Body knows, that the moſt Learned Interpreters do not limit the Incarnation, to the Perſon of the *Logos* or Son: But they ſay, the whole Divinity, or as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *the fulneſs of the Godhead* (was Incarnate, or) *dwelt in Chriſt*. By which, notwithſtanding, they do not mean; that God was ſo Incarnate, or ſo dwells in the Humanity of Chriſt, that he is not alſo every-where elſe: But only thus, Chriſt is *perfect God* in reſpect of God in him; becauſe, or *as* God is *perfect God* in whatſoever Place or Perſon he is; God is perfect God in the very leaſt point of ſpace, no leſs than in never ſo large a portion of Extenſion.

I ſay now, hereupon; whenever our Saviour is called *God*, or the other great things (mentioned in the Objection) are ſaid of him: We underſtand indeed thoſe Attributions, of *his Perſon*; but of his Perſon in reſpect only of

the Divine Nature, or *the inhabiting Divinity*. If the Realists find our Saviour is called *God*, is said to be Omnipotent, Omniscient or Omnipresent, has the Creation of all things imputed to him; let 'em know, all this is affirmed of *his Person*, but in regard only of the Inhabiting Divinity, or (as the Scriptures speak) *God in him* And to believe otherwise of these matters, is the Heresy of *Eutyches*; condemned in so many General Councils.

I confess, these are Depths that ought to be spoke of with great Caution; and as much Moderation: And for that reason, I have said no more, than I thought was absolutely necessary to make my self understood; and to vindicate the Explication of the Church, from the Exception of the Realists. But if occasion be given, by some such Opposer as appears to understand well these Questions; and is disposed, to argue not for Victory, Interest, or a Party, but to clear the Truth: I shall make no difficulty, to be as explicit, and particular, in answer to this Objection of the Realists; as shall be required, or desired of me.

The Expedients of Peace.

Having gone thorough two Parts, of what I designed and proposed; namely, the Account of the different Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Defence of the Orthodox Faith: The last only, but withal the most difficult, remains to be spoke to. How Peace and Charity may be preserved, in this diversity of Opinions, about a most important Question?

There is no man that believes a Doctrine, but he would be glad, and is in some degree active, to get it generally owned; for every Person is naturally a Friend to what, he supposes to be the Truth: But surely, 'tis an Excess, if we seek to establish, or to propagate Truth, a Divine thing; by the methods of Hell, Wrath, Bitterness, Revilings, Force, Fraud,

Fraud, Perſecutions, and ſuch like. What have Anger, Fraud and Violence, Infernal Arts, to do with Truth; a ſacred thing? Truth diſdains to be put into the Chair, by ſuch hands as thoſe. 'Tis a part of the nature of Truth, to prevail by her own Light and (perſuaſive) Power; without the concurrence of any other (over officious) Helpers: Or otherwiſe, willingly to ſuffer repulſe, and chuſe excluſion. But the Clergy (more eſpecially) ſhould argue, without Contending; Diſpute, without ſtriving: Becauſe we have this particular Charge, given to us, 2 *Tim.* 2. 24. *The ſervant of God, muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle to all men; —with mildneſs* (ἐν πραΰτητι) *inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves.*

Of all whether Faults, or Blemiſhes, Error is the leaſt; ſimple Error (or Error not cauſed by a ſupine Negligence, or Corrupt Paſſions, which ſway us) is neither Blemiſh, nor Fault. *Fault* it cannot be pretended to be: but I contend, 'tis not ſo much as a blemiſh; if by blemiſh be meant ſomething that deſerves ſcorn, or reproach. For frail and fallible Natures, as ours are, ought not to be ſcorned, for not acting above their Powers; that is, for not being Infallible, or not being exempt from ſome Errors.

As reaſonable as all this is, and as plainly as it has been commanded to us; I think, no Debates have been managed with that bitterneſs, no Queſtions debated with that virulence, as the Theological? When will Divines be aſhamed, of ſacrificing their *Charity*, without which all *Knowledge*, nay and all *Faith* (the Apoſtle himſelf ſaith) are mere Vanities; to their Paſſions: That is, to the ſenſual and brutal part of our Natures? The *Tartars* manage their Wars, with leſs Cruelty; than the Clergy. If we accuſe one of our Order, though never ſo learned and deſerving, of Error; we do not willingly give over, till we leave him neither Bread, nor good Name: There is neither meaſure, nor end of our Reproaches and Infamations; and after all, if we can,

can, we deprive him too. Nay this is a great deal of moderation, and practiſed only among Proteſtants; and that too, but in ſome Caſes, and ſome Countries.

'Tis true, that to palliate the matter; what in others we call Malice, Inhumanity, Barbarity, in our ſelves is holy *Zeal*. If the *Mahometans* or *Pagans* were guilty of ſuch debacchations in Language, againſt one another; or ſuch inmunities, in Practice: We ſhould object theſe Faults, to their very Religion and Principles; we ſhould ſay, How theſe Infidels worry one another? But while our ſelves do it, we call our ſelves *the Champions of Truth*, and our Brutalities *the Holy War*.

There are however two Expedients, the *firſt* of which would appeaſe this Diſorder, and rectify this Deformity: The other, and which I fear is the only thing to be hoped for, will prevent any dangerous Conſequences to the State or Church, from Contentions ſo managed.

1. The firſt Expedient is in the Litigants themſelves; namely, That as they teach the Goſpel to others, they would not think themſelves to be above the Charges, and Commands of it. Thoſe Commandments eſpecially, which we our ſelves are wont to recommend to our People; as the Vital, the Eſſential, and Integrating Parts of Chriſtianity. *Follow peace with all men*, ſay we, when in our Pulpits. *The wiſdom that is from above, is pure, peaceable, gentle. Let all bitterneſs, anger, clamour, evil-ſpeaking, be put away from among you. Be kindly-affected toward one another; in honour preferring one another. Where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work. Let nothing be done through ſtrife, but with lowlineſs of mind let each eſteem other better than themſelves*, Heb. 12. 7. James 3. 17. Eph. 4. 31. Rom. 12. 20. James 3. 16. Phil. 2. 3.

Theſe are our golden Sayings, to our People; the Subjects of whole Diſcourſes, and Subjects often reſumed by us. Why do we diſdain then, to practiſe theſe bleſſed Precepts

our

our ſelves: Why do we pull down, by an (execrable) Example, what will never be ſet up by a mere (mercenary) Eloquence? The World muſt ſee us live our Doctrine; or they will never be converted to it, any farther than we are: namely, by approving it, in the Speculation; and diſpenſing with, or diſtinguiſhing themſelves off from, the Practice. This was the difference, and the reaſon (at the ſame time) of the ſo different Succeſs, of the Apoſtles preaching, and ours; they lived the Goſpel, we talk it.

Were our Books of Diſputation, as full of Charity, as we require (by our Sermons) that the Converſation of our People ſhould be; our Diſputes and Writings would be excellent Expedients, of improving Knowledge, and diſcovering Truth: And not, as now, the means of perpetuating Controverſies; and of widening, and imbittering them.

We find indeed abundance of palliations, for our Murders, of one another's Fame; and for our depriving Families of their Bread, and Children of their Inheritance, by our proſecutions of others for their Conſcience: That is, for their Loyalty, and (neceſſary) Obedience to God. But will the unerring Judge admit of the diſtinctions, by which we elude, and diſannul his Laws? Will it ſuffice to ſay to him, we were firſt provoked by others; to him that has commanded, *Render not evil for evil, neither railing for railing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing?* Will it be accepted, when we plead; that we contended for Truth, againſt Error; or as we have learned to ſpeak, for Faith, againſt Hereſy: will ſuch a Pretence ſatisfy him, who has declared, that *Charity is greater than Faith, or Knowledge?*

In ſhort, The firſt and beſt Expedient, I ſay, is; That Writers and Preachers argue their Controverſies, with that Spirit of Charity, of Tenderneſs, and of Deference towards their Oppoſites: which the Goſpel, we preach to others, does more eſpecially require of us.

2. But

2. But the next is, That neither the Government, nor my Lords the Biſhops, eſpouſe either Side; in their publick capacity, that is, as Magiſtrates, or as Biſhops. While private Divines, or Biſhops only as they are Doctors, not (Juridically) as Biſhops, write, preach, or declare for the one or the other Party; the matter is not much: The heat between the Litigants will by degrees ſpend it ſelf; and the violent Wind (now riſing and increaſing) will languiſh, into a Serene. So it hapned here in *England*, in the Remonſtrant, *Quinquarticular*, or as ſome call it the *Arminian* Controverſy: Neither the King, nor the Parliament, nor the Biſhops as ſuch, condemning or cenſuring either Party; the Contention died away; neither Church nor State ſuffered any the leaſt Convulſions by it. Not ſo in *Holland*, or *France*; or in other parts, where the ſame Queſtions were controverted under other names. In *Holland* for inſtance, there has been three or four Overturnings of the State it ſelf; by occaſion of that Controverſy. And the Church there ſuffered as much; the principal Learned men being deprived, in the ſucceſſive turns of prevalence, of their reſpective Parties. The chief effect of the Synod of *Dort* was, that the principal Divines of the Church; and the Profeſſors, upon whoſe Reputation abroad, the *Dutch* Univerſities did ſubſiſt; were diſplaced: And being diſplaced; Diſcontents, Tumults, new Parties and Sects, an unreconcileable Rancour on the minds of the Provincial-States, and other Grandees of the Countrey, grew up, and every day multiplied. And this is always the effect, when Publick Authority quitting its Place and Dignity, makes it ſelf a Party. 'Tis (almoſt) never, that a Controverſy is ſo ended: All that is gained by the partiality of the Publick, is, That the moſt Eminent Perſons both for Learning and Probity ſuffer, in the viciſſitudes of their Parties; and only Hypocrites and Weathercocks, Dunces and Trimmers, fill the Chairs and Pulpits.

In the *Jewiſh* Church, as wide and important as the Difference

rence was, between the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*; the Government whether of Church or State never ſo eſpouſed either Party, as to excommunicate, or otherwiſe exclude the other. The Eccleſiaſtical Council, the Courſes of the Prieſts, the Offices of the Temple, the High-Prieſthood it ſelf, were equally open, to all Candidates of Learning and Merit, whether they were *Phariſees* or *Sadducees*. 'Twas thought but reaſonable, and neceſſary to the publick Peace and Safety, that all who owned the Law and Prophets, ſhould be admitted to all the Priviledges of true *Jews*; how much ſoever they might differ from one another, in their Interpreting thoſe Sacred Books.

I am perſuaded, that the way to prevent any Opinion from growing too faſt, or much, is; to give it vent: Suffer it to be argued, let the Doctors diſpute it; 'twill not be long, before there are ſo many able Perſons on both ſides, that neither ſhall make any very conſiderable progreſs.

Beſides; different Opinions and Parties in the Catholick Church, if the Government carries it ſelf equally to them, produce many excellent Effects; this eſpecially. That the Miniſtry is more Learned, more Diligent, and more Exemplary; than if one Party being abſolute Maſters, ſhall therefore (ſuch is Human Frailty, more apt to be corrupted by Proſperity, than by all other Snares together) abandon it ſelf to Licentiouſneſs, Ignorance, and Idleneſs.

But if Church-men, as Intereſſed Perſons, will but faintly conſider theſe things; yet the Civil Government, becauſe it propounds the Publick Weal and Preſervation for its end, cannot neglect them, without failing very often of that end. No Government (whether it were a Monarchy or a Republick) was ever overturned, by its Indifferency and Impartiality to Contending Parties in the Church; but only by a profeſſed Partiality for one Side, againſt the other: It is this only, that has cauſed Rebellions and Civil Wars, that Queſtions ariſing between Learned and Able Managers; firſt the Government in the Church, then the Regen-

cy in the State, has attempted to deſtroy one of the Parties.

Father *Paul* the *Servite*, Author of the (ſo much celebrated) Hiſtory of the Council of *Trent*, was of opinion; That Pope *Leo* X. was much in the right, when he ſo greatly blamed himſelf for ſiding with the *Dominicans*, againſt *M. Luther* and the *Friers Auſtins*, in the Queſtions concerning Indulgencies. Had the Pope left the Doctors to diſpute it out; 'tis believed that *Luther* would have preſerved his reſpect for the perſon of the Pope, and the Holy See as they call it: He ever profeſſed to ſubmit himſelf to the Pope, and the Church; till the Pope declared againſt him, and excommunicated him. And 'tis the general Opinion of the more judicious Hiſtorians, as well as of Father *Paul*; that (humanly ſpeaking) there had never been any Reformation, if that Pope had permitted the Doctors to diſpute till they were weary; preferring in the mean time thoſe of both Parties, who were Leading men, and men of Learning and Probity.

The bad Succeſs of Pope *Leo*, in ingaging on a particular Side, when he ſhould have been indifferent to both, has been the cauſe; that the Pope and Conclave would never determine the Queſtion, between the *Dominicans* and *Franciſcans*, concerning the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin *Mary*. For tho both Orders profeſs, to ſubmit to the Judgment of the Pope, and Church: Yet they at *Rome*, are now ſo wiſe, as to underſtand this to be meant, not of an abſolute ſubmiſſion; but ſo long (only) as his Holineſs, and the Church, ſide not againſt them.

A late Pope, zealous of the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, propounded in the Conclave; that ſeeing the Immaculate Conception is *the current Doctrine* of the Church of *Rome*, the denial of it ſhould be declared to be Hereſy. He ſaid, he feared not, that the *Dominicans* would ſhew themſelves good Catholicks: They would imbrace, and profeſs this Doctrine; when the contrary is once pronounced by the Church to be Hereſy. Nay, he himſelf would undertake for the *Dominicans*; that they would ſubmit

mit to the Church, as they promiſe every day, and have always profeſſed and promiſed. But *the Conclave* were far from being ſatisfied, either with thoſe Promiſes; or with the Pope's undertaking for the *Dominicans*, in a Caſe and Queſtion to which that Order had always oppoſed it ſelf. In ſhort, They told his Holineſs; that when the Doctors profeſs moſt of all their Obedience and Duty to the Church, they leaſt of all intend it: They mean only, that as they complement high; ſo the Church alſo ſhould reſpect *them*. Whenever the Church ſhall condemn the Doctrines, they have ſo long eſpouſed; and therefore cannot recede from them, with Honour: They will be far from obeying the Papal Deciſions, they will certainly make a Schiſm; and call the Univerſal *Paſtor*, a *Wolf*. They ſaid moreover, the General Council of *Trent* obſerved all along this Rule; to ſpeak of the Controverſies among Catholicks, in ſuch general terms, that each Party might interpret the Canon to their own advantage: That while this Method is followed, they might preſerve the Church from Convulſions and Schiſm; whenever it ſhall be neglected, that neglect will indanger the very Being of the Church. The Pope hereupon, not quite grown a Child again, gave way to this Remonſtrance of the Purple College: He was content, to ſave his own Soul, as he reckoned; and ſuffer the *Dominicans* to be damned.

We may apply this, to the preſent Caſe of our own Church. The Nominals will leſs give up *Homo-ouſios* (one Subſtance, and one Spirit;) or conſent that it be interpreted, by three Infinite Subſtances, or three Eternal Spirits and Minds: than either the *Franciſcans* or *Dominicans* will yield up, their ſide of the Queſtion concerning the Immaculate Conception. Nor have the Writers of the other ſide, the Realiſts, ſhewn a greater diſpoſition, to recede from the Cauſe they have undertaken: That it would be the moſt unadviſed Act, the Government could (be overſeen to) do; to declare authoritatively and juridically for, or againſt either of the Parties.

If

If thoſe trifling Controverſies, concerning a Surplice, the Croſs after Baptiſm, and ſuch like, could not be determined or quieted; by all the Authority of the Regency, the King and Parliament, or of the Church and Prelacy; but that they have ſtill broke out anew, till the Government (both in State and Church) has been forced to allow both Parties their own Doctrine and Practice: How much leſs will ſuch a Conteſt as this; Whether there are one or more Infinite and Divine Spirits, and equally the Objects of the higheſt Love and Worſhip; be ended any other way? For the Nominals contend, that three Divine Spirits are *three Gods*: And the Realiſts, that one Numerical Subſtance, one Eternal Spirit, with three Properties, or three merely Relative Subſiſtences (*Original Mind*, with the two Immanent Acts of *Reflex Wiſdom* and *Divine Love*) is not three Perſons; but *one Phyſical Perſon with three Properties*. When the Challenges and Pretences run ſo high, on both Sides: There is no way to Peace, but by a Toleration of both Parties; nay an equal Countenance, toward them both.

I have ſaid, what I intended, concerning the Controverſy depending; and upon a review of the whole, I know not how to depart from the leaſt Period of it. I am ſenſible alſo, that the Side I have taken, will give me no thanks for what I have ſaid on this laſt Head, *the Expedients of Peace*; it may be, I ſhall be even pelted with Reproaches, and Calumnies. I ſubmit to the ordinary Fate of ſuch as would make Peace: I ſhall however always abide by it, That Charity is greater than Faith; and Peace than Knowledge.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

IN the Title-page, *Diſintereſted*, r. Diſintereſſed. *The B. Trinity*, r. The Bl. Trinity. P. 6. l. 13. *Punctuation*, r. Punctation. P. 8. l. 16. *Homo-ouſios*, r. Homo-uſios. In like manner as oft as that word occurs. P. 16. l. 33. *Homo-ouſial*, r. Homo-uſial. P. 24. l. 7. *Abbot*, r. Abbat P. 37. L. 22. *Our Anſwer*, r, Our Argument. P. 62. l. 8. *immunities*, r. Immanities.